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PREFACE

'CÆDMON, sing me something.'—'What shall I sing?' —'Sing me the Story of Creation.' These words, recorded by the Venerable Bede concerning the first of our poets whose name we know, serve to remind us that the river which we call English Literature issues from a fountain of narrative poetry. In a generation which is rich in lyrics, as our own is, it is well to remember sometimes that the history of popular poetry, of the drama, and of the novel is indisputable evidence of the permanence of human interest in story. The point does not need to be argued; it requires only to be restated at a time when narrative poetry is not much cultivated. The mere mention of such poems as the *Iliad, Beowulf, The Song of Roland, The Story of the Niebelungs, The Canterbury Tales,* and *The Idylls of the King,* reminds us that the greatest poets of the world wrote stories in verse. The object of the present volume is to provide a collection of poems of moderate length for those who are not too old or too sophisticated to be delighted by narrative poetry.

A glance at the table of contents may cause a momentary surprise at the inclusion of some poems that are not obviously narrative. The principle, however, which underlies the selection is that nearly every piece either tells a story or inevitably suggests one. While *Lord Randal* is only a series of questions and answers, and Scott's *Border March* a pure lyric that actually requires music to make it thoroughly effective, in each case the reader's imagination at once sets about making up the story, or thousand and one stories that fit the situation. In the case of a few poems such as *A Mother in Egypt* and *Roundabouts and Swings,* the concreteness of the

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situation itself is the reason for their inclusion in a book of narrative poems.

On the subject of narrative poetry criticism maintains a curious silence. Much has been written about the epic, and much about narrative in verse, and whole libraries on poetry; but on the subject of poetic narrative little has been said. Perhaps the spirit which prompts this conspiracy of silence is beneficent on the whole, yet in a book of this kind something should be said about the essential qualities of narrative poetry. In the first place a narrative poem is the product of a writer who combines in himself the double role of story-teller and poet. Very frequently in narrative verse these roles are divorced to such an extent that the net result is either versified story, or imaginative poetry with only a slender thread of narrative. *Endymion, Childe Harold,* and *The Rape of the Lock* are outstanding examples of the latter, while Southey's *Madoc* by general consent would walk very well in the garb of prose, and few would contend that *John Gilpin* is anything but a versified tale. In the best narrative poetry, however, the two functions are so thoroughly fused that the reader, or, better, the listener, is unconscious of anything but the progress of imaginative story—story first, with the poetry as a pervading undertone like the skilfully played accompaniment of a vocal solo. The poet, like the good accompanist, never obtrudes himself. And yet the reader is conscious of something which vastly enhances the narrative, and without which the story, however adroitly constructed, would lack the individuality imparted to it by the peculiar genius of the poet. *The Ancient Mariner* is perhaps the supreme example of such fusion in English poetry; but there are numerous others that one would place in a rank only second to Coleridge's great performance: *Tam o'Shanter, The Eve of St. Agnes, Michael, Goblin Market, Childe Roland.* In compiling this book the editors have included no poem which, in their opinion, does not to some extent exhibit the fusion of the two elements of story and poetry. The degree of fusion, of course, varies with the poetic skill of the writer. In some of the poems there is an obvious attempt at poetic ornamentation, while in others the story element is emphasized.

From what has been said it follows that a good narrative poem cannot be turned into prose without losing its essential quality. The narrative itself may be retold as a very effective story, but the tale in its new form must have an effect upon the reader different from that of the original poem; for the method, the devices, the imaginative embellishments—in short, the technique of the ordinary short story—are different in kind from those of the narrative poem. Take, for instance, Wilfrid Gibson's *Flannan Isle*. The narrative advances smoothly until we are *in position,* so to speak, for the point of the story, and nothing happens. Yet no one would deny that *Flannan Isle* is an effective narrative poem. In fact it is effective largely by reason of the mystery in which the central action is shrouded. As in a Greek tragedy the catastrophe takes place off stage; unlike the ancient drama, however, the poem has no messenger to report what happened. But we do not want a messenger, nor do we desire a Sherlock Holmes or a M. Poirot to unravel for us the mystery. Such a method, effective in a narrative poem, is not the method of the short story, which normally requires, among other things, the rising interest, climax, and conclusion. In the contemporary short story, it is true, an effect is often aimed at which is very close to that of the narrative poem—a mood, or idea, or atmosphere—without emphasis upon events as such, and when the object has been attained the story ends with no attempt to tell what 'comes after.' Katherine Mansfield and Mr. de la Mare, to name only two writers, have presented us with good examples. Such stories approximate in method and devices the narrative poem; but generally speaking, what is unusual in the short story is normal in poetry of the kind here under discussion. Mr. Gibson's poem is perhaps an extreme instance of the effect of unsolved or unsolvable mystery—the essence of romance; but similar effects are produced in varying degrees in many of the poems of this collection; for instance, in *Childe Roland* and *The Raven*.

Since the peculiar poetic flavour of a narrative poem is due to the individuality of the writer, it is well to consider that personality. No two poets would tell the same story in the same way or from the same point of view, because they differ in their habits of thought, their emotional natures, and their modes of expression. This fact is attested by comparing Hunt's *Glove and the Lions* with Browning's poem *The Glove*, or Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* with the plays of Shakespeare and Dryden on the same subject. While it is impossible to 'explain' the individuality of a writer, sometimes a knowledge of his life, of the nature of his genius, of the circumstances in which he wrote, and of the object he had in view, helps the reader to appreciate the particular poetic flavour of his work. An extreme case in point is Poe's *Raven*, but such knowledge also throws light upon the difference and affinity between such poems as *Childe Roland* and *The Red Fisherman*, between *The Ancient Mariner* and *Brignall Banks*. And what shall be said of a poem like *Lord Randal*, typical of a kind of poetry which is characterized by the complete impersonality of the author? Simply this, that while the author is anonymous and has no individuality as a *person*, the ballad in question is one of the best examples of a type of poetry which reveals the personality of the *folk*, suggests their ways of making poetry, and memorably displays the passion and tragedy of their lives in such a climax as:

> I leave her hell and fire; mother, mak my bed soon,
> For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.

A few words should be said about the arrangement of the poems in the book. In the first place the division into two parts has not been made on the basis of difficulty. The main purpose was that if teachers wished to avoid monotony by varying the reading from year to year, they would have two sets of poems of about equal length at their disposal, and could feel reasonably sure that the balance between the various kinds of poetry had already been attended to by the editors. As to classification within the two parts, it was felt that any formal sorting of the poems was undesirable; that a classification which could make any claim to completeness would at best be a forced one, and the reader would feel that he was asked to look at many poems from a point of view with which he did not agree, and would consequently be confused or irritated or both. For example, *Blenheim* might logically be called a poem of war, yet the reader would naturally object that it is the antithesis of a poem like *The Revenge,* with which it would be classed. But while a full classification is impossible, undesirable, and unprofitable, poems which resemble one another in content or form have often been drawn together, and the groups thus formed will easily be recognized. For further grouping the following suggestions are thrown out. Poems of war and fighting have not received as large a share of recognition as is customary in anthologies of this kind, yet a considerable group is suggested by such titles as *The Revenge* and *Border March.* Love is the subject of a small class represented, say, by *The Pilot of the Plains.* The reader may decide for himself whether *Goblin Market* should be classed with *Christmas at Sea* and *Forty Singing Seamen* as a poem of adventure. Poems which emphasize death have been purposely excluded from the collection, and yet a number of pieces in the book could be grouped under the heading 'Death.' In almost every case, however, it will be found that death is an incident, and far from tinging the particular poem with gloom, imparts to it the exaltation which is the essence of tragedy. Sir Richard's death in *The Revenge*, for example, is an occasion for enforcing the glory of a great achievement; and who would say that the dominant idea of *A Mother in Egypt* is death rather than maternal love? Humorous poems with an undertone of seriousness would include such pieces as *The Stone*, *The Glove and the Lions*, and *Roundabout and Swings*, and to this group *The Well of St. Keyne* might be added for want of a better place to put it. Various other combinations could be made with more or less damage to groups already indicated, but we shall not carry these suggestions further than to pause for a minute on a very striking group wherein terror of various kinds and degrees is the dominant tone. *Goblin Market* is a fairy tale which many consider to have a pretty obvious allegory woven through its fantastic imagery. From this point of view the terror, faintly suggested and happily overcome, is that which is connected with indulgence in the pleasures of sense. *The Ancient Mariner*, with its plainly pointed 'lesson,' is perhaps the highest expression in English poetry of the mysterious terror as well as of the splendour of the sea. Like the former poem, it has its humour, and as for grotesque imagery, the fancy

cannot pierce a wink beyon
But doubts discovery there.

The counterpart, in a sense, of Coleridge's poem is *Childe Roland*, with its memorable landscape of boding horror, poisonous malignity, and devastating terror, wrought in colours wildly extravagant. The humour of the piece is of the grimmest sort, and links Browning's poem with a fourth in the group, *The Red Fisherman*, which enforces the mental terror that follows ill-judged and overweening ambition. This group might be extended by the inclusion of *Flannan Isle* and perhaps one or two other pieces.

In handing the book over to the reader let us remark that 'allegory,' 'lesson,' 'moral,' need not be sought where none is plainly marked. There is no reason why an allegorical interpretation should not be made if there is sufficient warrant for it in the text, since that is one of the ways the imagination frequently works, especially in young readers, who are incorrigible moralists. But why worry about a 'lesson' when the poet has striven to enforce none?

Finally, it must be remembered that narrative poetry is first of all poetry; and as Shakespeare's plays are not ordinarily read as illustrations of dramatic laws, so the narrative poems of this book should not be regarded primarily as exercises in story technique.

W. L. M.
F. C. W.

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Part One

Lord Randal

'O WHERE ha you been, Lord Randal, my son?
And where ha you been, my handsome young man?'
'I ha been at the greenwood; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down.'

'An wha met ye there, Lord Randal, my son?'
An wha met you there, my handsome young man?'
'O I met wi my true-love; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down.'

'And what did she give you, Lord Randal, my son?
And what did she give you, my handsome young man?'
'Eels fried in a pan; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down.'

'And wha gat your leavins, Lord Randal, my son?
And wha gat your leavins, my handsome young man?'
'My hawks and my hounds; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down.'

'And what becam of them, Lord Randal, my son?
And what becam of them, my handsome young man?'
'They stretched their legs out an died; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm wearied wi huntin, and fain wad lie down.'

'O I fear you are poisoned, Lord Randal, my son!
I fear you are poisoned, my handsome young man!'
'O yes, I am poisoned; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.'

'What d'ye leave to your mother, Lord Randal, my son?
What d'ye leave to your mother, my handsome young man?'

'Four and twenty milk kye; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.'

'What d'ye leave to your sister, Lord Randal, my son?
What d'ye leave to your sister, my handsome young man?'
'My gold and my silver; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.'

'What d'ye leave to your brother, Lord Randal, my son?
What d'ye leave to your brother, my handsome young man?'
'My houses and my lands; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.'

'What d'ye leave to your true-love, Lord Randal, my son?
What d'ye leave to your true-love, my handsome young man?'
"I leave her hell and fire; mother, mak my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wad lie down.'

Anonymous.

Sir Patrick Spens

The king sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:
'Oh whar will I get guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?'

Up and spak an eldern knicht
Sat at the kings richt kne:
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor
That sails upon the se.'

The king has written a braid letter,
And signd it wi his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,
  A loud lauch lauched he;
The next line that Sir Patrick red,
  The teir blinded his ee.

'O wha is this has don this deid,
  This ill deid don to me,
To send me out this time o' the yeir,
  To sail upon the se!'

'Mak hast, mak hast, my mirry men all,
  Our guid schip sails the morne':
'O say na sae, my master deir,
  For I feir a deadlie storme.'

'Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,
  Wi the auld moone in hir arme,
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
  That we will cum to harme.'

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith
  To weet their cork-heild schoone,
But lang owre a' the play wer playd,
  Thair hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
  Wi thair fans into their hand,
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence
  Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
  Wi thair gold kems in their hair,
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,
  For they'll see thame na mair.

Haf owre, haf owre to Aberdour,
  It's fiftie fadom deip,
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
  Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

Anonymous.

The Braes o' Yarrow

LATE at e'en, drinking the wine,
And ere they paid the lawing,
They set a combat them between,
To fight it in the dawing.

'What though ye be my sister's lord,
We'll cross our swords to-morrow.
What though my wife your sister be,
I'll meet ye then on Yarrow.'

'O stay at hame, my ain gude lord!
O stay, my ain dear marrow!
My cruel brither will you betray
On the dowie banks o' Yarrow.'

'O fare ye weel, my lady dear!
And put aside your sorrow;
For if I gae, I'll sune return
Frae the bonny banks o' Yarrow.

She kissed his cheek, she kaimed his hair,
As oft she'd done before, O;
She belted him with his gude brand,
And he's awa' to Yarrow.

When he gaed up the Tennies bank,
As he aed money a morrow,
Nine armed men lay in a den
On the dowie braes o' Yarrow.

'O come ye here to hunt or hawk
The bonny forest thorough?
Or come ye here to wield your brand
Upon the banks o' Yarrow?'

'I come not here to hunt or hawk,
As oft I've done before, O,
But I come here to wield my brand
Upon the banks o' Yarrow.

'If ye attack me nine to ane,
  That God may send ye sorrow!—
Yet will I fight while stand I may,
  On the bonnie banks o' Yarrow.'

Two has he hurt, and three has slain,
  On the bloody braes o' Yarrow;
But the stubborn knight crept in behind,
  And pierced his body thorough.

'Gae hame, gae hame, you brither John,
  And tell your sister sorrow,—
To come and lift her leafu' lord
  On the dowie banks o' Yarrow.'

Her brither John gaed ower the hill,
  As oft he's done before, O;
There he met his sister dear,
  Cam rinnin' fast to Yarrow.

'I dreamt a dream last night,' she says,
  'I wish it binna sorrow;
I dreamt I pu'd the heather green
  Wi' my true love on Yarrow.'

'I'll read your dream, sister,' he says,
  'I'll read it into sorrow;
Ye're bidden go take up your love,
  He's sleeping sound on Yarrow.'

She's torn the ribbons frae her head
  That were baith braid and narrow;
She's kilted up her lang claithing,
  And she's awa' to Yarrow.

She's ta'en him in her arms twa,
  And gi'en him kisses thorough;
She sought to bind his many wounds,
  But he lay dead on Yarrow.

'O haud your tongue,' her father says,
  'And let be a' your sorrow;
I'll wed you to a better lord
  Than him you lost on Yarrow.'

'O haud your tongue, father,' she says,
  'Far worse ye make my sorrow; 70
A better lord could never be
  Than him that lies on Yarrow.'

She kissed his lips, she kaimed his hair,
  As aft she'd done before, O;
And there with grief her heart did break
  Upon the banks o' Yarrow.

Old Ballad.

Brignall Banks

SONG

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
  Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
  Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle wall
  Was singing merrily,—
'O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green; 10
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
  Than reign our English queen.'

'If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
  To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
  That dwell by dale and down!
And if thou canst that riddle read,
  As read full well you may,

Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,
As blithe as Queen of May.'—
Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there,
Than reign our English queen.

'I read you, by your bugle-horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn,
To keep the king's greenwood.'—
'A Ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.'—
Yet sung she, 'Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May!

'With burnish'd brand and musketoon,
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum.'—
'I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.
And, O! though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of May!

'Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die!
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I!

And when I'm with my comrades met,
  Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
  Nor think what we are now.
Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
  And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
  Would grace a summer queen.'

Sir Walter Scott.

The Feud

'I HEAR a cry from the Sansard cave,
  O mother, will no one hearken?
A cry of the lost, will no one save?
A cry of the dead, though the oceans rave,
And the scream of a gull as he wheels o'er a grave,
  While the shadows darken and darken.'

'Oh, hush thee, child, for the night is wet,
  And the cloud-caves split asunder,
With lightning in a jagged fret,
Like the gleam of a salmon in the net,
When the rocks are rich in the red sunset,
  And the stream rolls down in thunder.'

'Mother, O mother, a pain at my heart,
  A pang like the pang of dying.'
'Oh, hush thee, child, for the wild birds dart
Up and down, and close and part,
Wheeling round where the black cliffs start,
  And the foam at their feet is flying.'

'O mother, a strife like the black clouds' strife,
  And a peace that cometh after.'
'Hush, child, for peace is the end of life,
And the heart of a maiden finds peace as a wife,
But the sky and the cliffs and the ocean are rife
  With the storm and thunder's laughter.

'Come in, my sons, come in and rest,
  For the shadows darken and darken,
And your sister is pale as the white swan's breast,
And her eyes are fixed and her lips are pressed
In the death of a name ye might have guessed,
  Had ye twain been here to hearken.' 30

'Hush, mother, a corpse lies on the sand,
  And the spray is round it driven,
It lies on its face, and one white hand
Points through the mist on the belt of strand
To where the cliffs of Sansard stand,
  And the ocean's strength is riven.'

'Was it God, my sons, who laid him there?
  Or the sea that left him sleeping?'
'Nay, mother, our dirks where his heart was bare,
As swift as the rain through the teeth of the air;
And the foam-fingers play in the Saxon's hair, 41
  While the tides are round him creeping.'

'Oh, curses on you, hand and head,
  Like the rains in this wild weather,
The guilt of blood is swift and dread,
Your sister's face is cold and dead,
Ye may not part whom God would wed
  And love hath knit together.'

Frederick George Scott.

Flannan Isle

'Though three men dwell on Flannan Isle
To keep the lamp alight,
As we steered under the lee, we caught
No glimmer through the night!'

A passing ship at dawn had brought
The news; and quickly we set sail,
To find out what strange thing might ail
The keepers of the deep-sea light.

The winter day broke blue and bright,
With glancing sun and glancing spray,
While o'er the swell our boat made way,
As gallant as a gull in flight.

But as we neared the lonely Isle,
And looked up at the naked height,
And saw the lighthouse towering white,
With blinded lantern, that all night
Had never shot a spark
Of comfort through the dark,
So ghostly in the cold sunlight
It seemed, that we were struck the while
With wonder all too dread for words.

And as into the tiny creek
We stole beneath the hanging crag,
We saw three queer, black, ugly birds—
Too big, by far, in my belief,
For guillemot or shag—
Like seamen sitting bolt-upright
Upon a half-tide reef;
But, as we neared, they plunged from sight,
Without a sound, or spurt of white.
And still too mazed to speak,

We landed; and made fast the boat;
And climbed the track in single file,
Each wishing he were safe afloat,
On any sea, however far,
So be it far from Flannan Isle:
And still we seemed to climb, and climb,
As though we'd lost all count of time,
And so must climb for evermore.
Yet all too soon we reached the door—
The black, sun-blistered lighthouse door,
That gaped for us ajar.

As, on the threshold, for a spell,
We paused, we seemed to breathe the smell
Of limewash and of tar,
Familiar as our daily breath,
As though 'twere some strange scent of death:
And so, yet wondering, side by side,
We stood a moment, still tongue-tied:
And each with black foreboding eyed
The door, ere we should fling it wide,
To leave the sunlight for the gloom:
Till, plucking courage up, at last,
Hard on each other's heels we passed,
Into the living-room.

Yet as we crowded through the door,
We only saw a table, spread
For dinner, meat and cheese and bread;
But, all untouched; and no one there:
As though, when they sat down to eat,
Ere they could even taste,
Alarm had come; and they in haste
Had risen and left the bread and meat:
For at the table-head a chair
Lay tumbled on the floor.
We listened; but we only heard
The feeble cheeping of a bird
That starved upon its perch:
And, listening still, without a word
We set about our hopeless search

We hunted high, we hunted low;
And soon ransacked the empty house;
Then o'er the Island, to and fro,
We ranged, to listen and to look
In every cranny, cleft or nook
That might have hid a bird or mouse.
But though we searched from shore to shore,
We found no sign in any place:

And soon again stood face to face
Before the gaping door:
And stole into the room once more
As frightened children steal.

Ay: though we hunted high and low,
And hunted everywhere,
Of the three men's fate we found no trace
Of any kind in any place,
But a door ajar, and an untouched meal,
And an overtoppled chair.

And so we listened in the gloom
Of that forsaken living-room—
A chill clutch on our breath—
We thought how ill-chance came to all
Who kept the Flannan Light:
And how the rock had been the death
Of many a likely lad:
How six had come to a sudden end,
And three had gone stark mad:

And one whom we'd all known as friend
Had leapt from the lantern one still night,
And fallen dead by the lighthouse wall:
And long we thought
On the three we sought,
And of what might yet befall.

Like curs a glance has brought to heel,
We listened, flinching there:
And looked, and looked, on the untouched meal,
And the overtoppled chair.

We seemed to stand for an endless while,
Though still no word was said,
Three men alive on Flannan Isle,
Who thought on three men dead.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.

The Ballad of Father Gilligan

THE old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day,
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

'I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die';
And after cried he, 'God forgive!
My body spake, not I!'

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind;
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow-chirp
When the moths came once more,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor.

'Mavrone, mavrone! the man has died
While I slept on the chair.'
He roused his horse out of its sleep,
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
'Father! you come again!'

'And is the poor man dead?' he cried.
'He died an hour ago.'
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.

'When you were gone, he turned and died
As merry as a bird.'
The old priest Peter Gilligan
He knelt him at that word.

'He Who hath made the night of stars
For souls who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

'He Who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair.'

William Butler Yeats.

Mia Carlotta

GIUSEPPE, da barber, ees greata for 'mash,'
He gotta da bigga, da blacka mustache,
Good clo'es an' good styla an' playnta good cash.

W'enevra Giuseppe ees walk on da street,
Da peopla dey talka, 'how nobby! how neat!
How softa da handa, how smalla da feet.'

He raisa hees hat an' he shaka hees curls,
An' smila weeth teetha so shiny like pearls;
O! many da heart of da seelly young girls
He gotta.
Yes, playnta he gotta—
But notta
Carlotta!

Giuseppe, da barber, he maka da eye,
An' lika de steam engine puffa an' sigh,
For catcha Carlotta w'en she ees go by.
Carlotta she walka weeth nose in da air,
An' look through Giuseppe weeth far-away stare,
As eef she no see dere ees som'body dere.

Giuseppe, da barber, he gotta da cash,
He gotta da clo'es and da bigga mustache,
He gotta da seelly young girls for da 'mash,'
But notta—
You bat my life, notta—
Carlotta
I gotta!

T. A. Daly.

The Death of the Hired Man

Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news

And put him on his guard. 'Silas is back.'
She pushed him outward with her through the door
And shut it after her. 'Be kind,' she said.
She took the market things from Warren's arms
And set them on the porch, then drew him down
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

'When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back,' he said.
'I told him so last haying, didn't I?
"If he left then," I said, "that ended it."
What good is he? Who else will harbour him
At his age for the little he can do?
What help he is there's no depending on.
Off he goes always when I need him most.

"He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,
Enough at least to buy tobacco with,
So he won't have to beg and be beholden."
"All right," I say, "I can't afford to pay
Any fixed wages, though I wish I could."
"Someone else can," "Then someone else will have to."
I shouldn't mind his bettering himself
If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's someone at him
Trying to coax him off with pocket-money,—
In haying time, when any help is scarce.
In winter he comes back to us. I'm done.'

'Sh! not so loud: he'll hear you,' Mary said.

'I want him to: he'll have to soon or late.'

'He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.
When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too—
You needn't smile—I didn't recognize him—
I wasn't looking for him—and he's changed.
Wait till you see.'

'Where did you say he'd been?'
'He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,
And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.
I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off.'

'What did he say? Did he say anything?'
'But little.'
'Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me.'

'Warren!'

'But did he? I just want to know.'
'Of course he did. What would you have him say?

Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
Some humble way to save his self-respect.
He added, if you really care to know,
He meant to clear the upper pasture, too.
That sounds like something you have heard before?
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times—he made me feel so queer—
To see if he was talking in his sleep.
He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—
The boy you had in haying four years since.
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft
On education—you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on.'

'Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot.'

'Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some things linger!
Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathise. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.
Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it—that an argument!
He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong—

Which showed how much good school had ever done
him.
He wanted to go over that. But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay——'

'I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself.'

'He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different.'

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard the tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
'Warren,' she said, 'he has come home to die:
You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time.'

'Home,' he mocked gently.
'Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
Than was the hound that came a stranger to us

Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail.'
'Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.'

'I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve.'

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
'Silas has better claim on us, you think
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his door.
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
A somebody—director in the bank.'

'He never told us that.'

'We know it though.'

'I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right
To take him in, and might be willing to—
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?'

'I wonder what's between them.'

'I can tell you.
Silas is what he is—we wouldn't mind him—
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad.
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anyone. He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he is.'

'I can't think Si ever hurt anyone.'

'No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back
He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.
I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him—how much he's broken.
His working days are done; I'm sure of it.'

'I'd not be in a hurry to say that.'

'I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He's come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan. You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon.'
It hit the moon.
Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.

Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

'Warren?' she questioned.

'Dead,' was all he answered.

Robert Frost.

The Plaint of the Camel

CANARY-BIRDS feed on sugar and seed,
Parrots have crackers to crunch;
And, as for the poodles, they tell me the noodles
Have chickens and cream for their lunch.
But there's never a question
About MY digestion—
ANYTHING does for me!

Cats, you're aware, can repose in a chair,
  Chickens can roost upon rails;
Puppies are able to sleep in a stable,
  And oysters can slumber in pails.
    But no one supposes
    A poor Camel dozes—
  ANY PLACE does for me!

Lambs are inclosed where it's never exposed,
  Coops are constructed for hens;
Kittens are treated to houses well heated,
  And pigs are protected by pens.
    But a Camel comes handy
    Wherever it's sandy—
  ANYWHERE does for me!

People would laugh if you rode a giraffe,
  Or mounted the back of an ox;
It's nobody's habit to ride on a rabbit,
  Or try to bestraddle a fox.
    But as for a Camel, he's
    Ridden by families—
  ANY LOAD does for me!

A snake is as round as a hole in the ground;
  And weasels are wavy and sleek;
And no alligator could ever be straighter
  Than lizards that live in a creek.
    But a Camel's all lumpy
    And bumpy and humpy—
  ANY SHAPE does for me!

Charles Edward Carryl.

The Flute

GOOD-NIGHT! he sang out cheerily—
Good-night!—and yet again—*Good-night!*

And I was gay that night to be
Once more in my clean countryside
Among the windy hills and wide.
Six days of city slush and mud,
Of hooting horn and spattering wheel,
Made me rejoice again to feel
The tingling frost that fires the blood
And sets life burning keen and bright,
And down the ringing road to stride
The eager swinging stride that braces
The straining thews from hip to heel,
To breathe again the wind that sweeps
Across the grassy Northern steeps
From crystal deeps and starry spaces.

And I was glad again to hear
The old man's greeting of good cheer.
For every night for many a year
At that same corner we had met,
Summer and winter, dry and wet;
And though I never once had heard
The old man speak another word,
His cheery greeting at the bend
Seemed like the welcome of a friend.

But as we neared to-night somehow
I felt that he would stop and speak—
Though he went by—and when I turned
I saw him standing in the road,
And looking back with hand to brow,
As if to shade old eyes grown weak
Awaiting the long sleep they'd earned,
Though, as again towards him I strode,
A friendly light within them burned.

And then as I drew nigh he spoke
With shaking head and voice that broke:

I've missed you these last nights, he said,
And I have not so many now
That I can miss friends easily. . . .
Ay, friends grow scarce as you grow old,
And roads are rough and winds are cold,
And when you feel you're growing old,
Life doesn't go too merrily.
And then he stood with nodding head
And spoke no more. And so I told
How I had been six days and nights
Exiled from pleasant sounds and sights;
And now, as though my voice had stirred
His heart to speech, he told right out
With quickening eye and quavering word
The things I care to hear about,
The little things that make up life—
How he'd been lonesome since his wife
Had died some thirty years ago;
And how he trudged three mile or so
To reach the farmstead where he worked,
And three mile back to his own door . . .
For he lived outby on the moor;
And every day the distance irked
More sorely still his poor old bones,
And all the road seemed strewn with stones
To trip you up when you were old,
When you were old and friends were few;
How, since the farmstead had been sold,
The master and the men were new,
All save himself, and they were young,
And mistress had a raspy tongue;
So often he would hardly speak
A friendly word from week to week
With any soul. Old friends had died
Or else had quit the countryside,
And since his wife was taken he
Had lived alone this thirty year:

And there were few who cared to hear
An old man's jabber . . . and too long
He'd kept me standing in the cold
With his long tongue and such a song
About himself! And I would be . . .
I put my arm through his and turned
To go upon his way with him;
And once again the warm light burned
In those old eyes so weak and dim,
When with weak piping voice he told
How much it meant to him each night
To change a kindly word with me,
To think that he'd at least one friend
Who'd happen miss him in the end.

Then as we walked he said no more;
And silent in the starry light
Across the wide sweet-smelling bent
Between the grass and stars we went
In quiet friendly company;
And all the way we only heard
A chirrup where some partridge stirred
And ran before us through the grass
To hide his head till we should pass.

At length we reached the cottage door;
But when I stopped and turned to go
His words came trembling and slow—
If I would step inside and rest
I'd be right welcome; not a guest
Had crossed his threshold thirty year . . .
He'd naught but bread and cheese and beer
To offer me . . . but I'd know best . . .

He spoke with hand upon the latch,
And, when I answered, opened wide
The cottage door and stepped inside,
And as I followed struck a match

And lit a tallow-dip, and stirred
The banked-up peats into a glow;
And then with shuffling step and slow
He moved about and soon had set
Two mugs of beer and bread and cheese:
And while we made a meal off these
The old man never spoke a word,
But brooding in the ingle-seat
With eyes upon the kindling peat
He seemed awhile to quite forget
He was not sitting by himself
To-night like any other night;
When as in the dim candle-light
I glanced around me, with surprise
I saw on the low rafter-shelf
A flute, nigh hidden in the shade.

And when I asked him if he played
The light came back into his eyes:
Ay, ay, he sometimes played a bit,
But not so often since she died.
And then, as though old memories lit
His poor old heart and made it glad
He told how he when quite a lad
Had taught himself—and they would play
On penny whistles all the day,
He and the miller's son beside
The millpool, chirping all they knew
Till they could whistle clean and true;
And how, when old enough to earn,
They'd both saved up to buy a flute,
And they had played it turn by turn:
But Jake was dead this long while back . . .
Ah! if I'd only heard him toot
I'd know what music meant. Ay, ay,
He'd play me something by and by,

Though he was naught to Jake; and now
His breath was scant and fingering slack . . .

He used to play to her at night
The melodies that she liked best
While she worked on: she'd never rest
By daylight or by candle-light . . .
And then with hand upon his brow
He brooded quiet in his chair
With eyes upon the red peat-glare,
Till with a sigh he roused himself
And reached the flute down from the shelf,
And carrying it outside the door
I saw him take a can and pour
Fresh water through the instrument,
To make it sweet of tone he said.
Then in his seat, so old and bent,
With kindling eyes and swaying head
He played the tunes he used to play
To please his wife before she died.
And as I watched his body sway
In time and tune from side to side—
So happy just to play and please
With old familiar melodies,
His eyes grew brighter and more bright
As though he saw some well-loved sight:
And following his happy gaze
I turned and saw without amaze
A woman standing, young and fair,
With hazel eyes and thick brown hair
Brushed smoothly backward from the brow
Beside the table that but now
Save for the empty mugs was bare.
Upon it she had spread a sheet
And stood there, ironing a shirt,
Her husband's, as he played to her
Her favourite tunes so old and sweet.

I watched her move with soundless stir
Then stand with listening eyes, and hold
The iron near her glowing cheek,
Lest it, too hot, should do some hurt,
And she, so careful not to burn
The well-darned shirt so worn and old.

Then something seemed to make me turn
To look on the old man again;
And as I looked the playing stopped,
And now I saw that he had dropped
Into his brooding mood once more
With eyes again grown dull and weak.
He seemed the oldest of old men,
Who grope through life with sight grown dim,
And even as I looked at him,
Too full of tender awe to speak,
I knew once more the board was bare
And no young woman standing there
With hazel eyes and thick brown hair.

And so, at last I rose and took
His hand, and as he clasped mine tight
I saw again that friendly look
Fill his old weary eyes with light
And wish me, without words, good-night:
And in my heart that look glowed bright
Till I reached home across the moor.

And, at the corner of the lane
Next night I heard the old voice cry
In greeting as I struggled by,
Head-down against the wind and rain:
And so each night until one day
His master chanced to cross my way;
But when I spoke of him he said:
Did I not know the man was dead,
And had been dead a week or so?

One morn he'd not turned up to work,
And never having known him shirk,
And hearing that he lived alone,
He'd thought it best himself to go
And see what ailed, and, coming there,
He found the old man in his chair
Stone-dead beside the cold hearthstone.
It must be full a week or more . . .
Ay, just two weeks come Saturday
He'd found him, but he must have died
Overnight—(the night I heard him play!)
And they had found, dropt by his side,
A broken flute upon the floor.

Yet every night his greeting still
At that same corner of the hill,
Summer and winter, wet or dry,
'Neath cloud or moon or cold starlight
Is waiting there to welcome me;
And ever as I hurry by
The old voice sings out cheerily—
Good-night! and yet again—*Good-night!*

W. W. Gibson.

To Daffodils

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon:
As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray'd together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a Spring!
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you, or any thing.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away
Like to the Summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

R. Herrick.

The Daffodils

I WANDER'D lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils,
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:—
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

William Wordsworth.

The Song of the Ski

Norse am I when the first snow falls;
Norse am I till the ice departs.
The fare for which my spirit calls
Is blood from a hundred viking-hearts.
The curved wind wraps me like a cloak;
The pines blow out their ghostly smoke.
I'm high on the hill and ready to go—
A wingless bird in a world of snow:
Yet I'll ride the air
With a dauntless dare
That only a child of the north can know.

The bravest ski has a cautious heart
And moves like a tortoise at the start,
But when it tastes the tang of the air
It leaps away like a frightened hare.
The day is gloomy, the curtains half-drawn,
And light is stunted as at the dawn:
But my foot is sure and my arm is brawn.

I poise on the hill and I wave adieu:
(My curving skis are firm and true)
The slim wood quickens, the air takes fire
And sings to me like a gypsy's lyre.
Swifter and swifter grows my flight:
The dark pines ease the unending white.
The lean, cold birches, as I go by,
Are like blurred etchings against the sky.

One am I for a moment's joy
With the falling star and the plunging bird.
The world is swift as an Arab boy;
The world is sweet as a woman's word.
Never came such a pure delight
To a bacchanal or a sybarite:
Swifter and swifter grows my flight,
And glad am I, as I near the leap,
That the snow is fresh and the banks are deep.

Swifter and swifter on I fare,
And soon I'll float with the birds on air.
The speed is blinding; I'm over the ridge,
Spanning space on a phantom bridge.
The drifts await me; I float, I fall:
The world leaps up like a lunging carp.
I land erect and the tired winds drawl
A lazy rune on a broken harp.
Child of the roofless world am I;
Not of the hibernating drones
Who fear the gray of a wintry sky
And the shrieking wind's ironic tones,
Who shuffle cards in a cloud of smoke
Or crawl like frozen flies at chess,
Or gossip all day with meddling folk
In collar of starch and a choking dress.

Come, ye maids of the vanity-box,
Come, ye men of the stifling air:
The white wind waits at your door and knocks;
The white snow calls you everywhere.
Come, ye lads of the lounge and chair,
And gird your feet with the valiant skis
And mount the steed of the winter air
And hold the reins of the winter breeze.

Lord of the mountains dark with pine!
Lord of the fields of smoking snow!
Grant to this vagrant heart of mine
A path of wood where my feet may go,
And a roofless world to my journey's end,
And a cask of wind for my cup of wine,
And yellow gold of the sun to spend,
And at night the stars in endless line,
And, after it all, the hand of a friend—
The hand of a trusted friend in mine.

Wilson MacDonald.

The Raven

ONCE upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
''Tis some visitor,' I muttered, 'tapping at my chamber door—
Only this, and nothing more.'

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless *here* for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
''Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
That it is, and nothing more.'

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
'Sir,' said I, 'or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you'—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, 'Lenore!'
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word 'Lenore!'
Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
'Surely,' said I, 'surely that is something at my window lattice:
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind, and nothing more.'

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore.
'Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,' I said, 'art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blest with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door—
With such name as 'Nevermore.'

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered, 'Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.'
Then the bird said, 'Nevermore.'

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
'Doubtless,' said I, 'what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of "Never—nevermore." '

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;

Then upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking 'Nevermore.'

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then methought the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.
'Wretch,' I cried, 'thy God hath lent thee—by these angels He hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe, from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh, quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

'Be that word our sign in parting, bird or fiend,' I shrieked, upstarting—
'Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!'
Quoth the Raven, 'Nevermore.'

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

Edgar Allan Poe.

Putting Winter to Bed

Old Winter with an angry frown
Restationed on his head his crown,
And grew more obdurate,
As rumours every day had flown
From some officials near the throne
That he might abdicate.

Fixing his rivals with his eyes,
He thumped his chest and slapped his thighs,
And ground his Arctic heel,
Splintering the dais, just to show
That he was lord of ice and snow,
With sinews of wrought steel.

His patience had been sorely tried
By a recent blow dealt to his pride,
When March, the stripling, dared
To jeer at him with callow yells,
And shake the hoary icicles
From off the royal beard.

Then at a most indecent time,
The lusty youngster nearing prime,
Gaining in reach and height,
Had called out Winter to his face
To meet him in a neutral place,
And join in single fight.

The gage accepted, Winter drew
First blood, then beat him black and blue
With Nordic thrust and swing,
Till March at last, the wily fox,
Clipped him on the equinox,
And bashed him round the ring;

And would have clearly had him down,
Captured his domain and crown,
When three parts through the bout,
Had not the king with a trick malign,
Cracked him on the nether sign,
And March was counted out.

So now, with an Alaskan ire,
He donned in full his white attire,
Lord of the Polar waste,
And claimed before those flabby-thewed
Contenders of a Southern brood,
He would not be displaced.

And yet before the week was passed,
Neuralgic headaches thick and fast
Were blinding him with tears;
Despite the boast, he needed rest
To stop that panting in his breast,
That buzzing in his ears.

He wandered to a frozen brook
Beneath dank willows where he took
His usual noon-day nap;
He heard dull subterranean calls,
Narcotic sounds from crystal falls,
The climbing of the sap.

He laid his head against a stump,
One arm reclined upon a clump
Of glaciated boulders;

The other held his side—he had
Pleuritic pains and very bad
Rheumatic hips and shoulders.

A sorry sight indeed he lay,
A god-like being in decay—
Dead leaves were all around him:
His favourite cave of ice was streaming,
And many a fallen trunk was steaming,
The day that April found him.

With one glance at his swollen feet,
Her diagnosis was complete,
That dropsy had set in:
She felt his pulse—'Lord, what a rate!
His heart is in a parlous state,
And colic roars within.

'O shame, that March should thus surprise him,
Without a thought to acclimatize him
Towards a mellow age;
I know another way benign
To lead him through an anodyne
Into his hermitage.'

She spent the morning in the search
For twigs of alder and of birch
And shoots of pussy willow;
She wove these through a maze of fern,
Added some moss on her return,
And made the downiest pillow.

Then with a bath of rain and sleet,
She took the chilblains from his feet
With tender lubrication:
She poulticed out the angry spots,
The kinks and cramps and spinal knots,
And all discoloration.

So with her first aid rendered, she
Began her ancient sorcery,
Quietly to restore
His over-burdened mind to sleep,
Dreamless and passionless and deep,
Out of her wild-wood lore.

It took three days to get his throat
Clear of that wheezy guttural note,
His brain to vaporize;
She conjured him at last to rest,
Folded his hands across his breast
And sealed up both his eyes.

Then over his lank form she threw
The lightest coverlet she knew,
Brought from her deepest glades—
The whites and greys of quiet mood,
Pale pinks and yellows all subdued
With brown and purple shades;

The choicest of her tapestries,
Spring beauties and anemones
Plucked from the winter grass,
Wake-robins too: with these she took
Trout-lilies from a woodland brook
And cool hepaticas.

With one thing more, her task was done—
Something she found hid from the sun
Within a valley low;
'Just what he needs, dawn fresh and white—
The north wind brought it over-night—
A counterpane of snow.

'So now this makes his bed complete.'
She doubled it across his feet,
And tucked it neatly in;

Then taking on a mood austere,
Kneeling, she whispered in his ear,
A word of discipline.

'Take heed! Before you enter sleep,
Swear by your honour you will keep
A vow which I propose:
Listen—an oath, which if you break,
'Twill carry for you in its wake
A multitude of woes.

'For eight months now without demur,
You give your promise not to stir,
And not to roar or wail,
Or send your north wind with its snow,
Or yet the east whose vapours blow
Their shuddering sleet and hail.

'So help you then for evermore—
If you so much as cough or snore,
My seven younger sisters,
Who follow after me in turn,
Are under strict command to burn
Your body up with blisters.

'Of autumn, too, you must beware,
For if you rise to scent the air,
Our Indian-summer maid
Will plague you past what you endure,
Until you think your temperature
One hundréd Centigrade.

'But if you keep this honest vow,
I pledge their virtue, here and now,
To rouse you in December;
Then you may come on Christmas Day
With furs and bells, reindeer and sleigh—
But, hand on heart—remember!'

And now, to make our pledge come true,
She walked around the king and drew
Three circles on his breast;
Murmured a charm, then bending down, 160
She graciously removed the crown,
And left him to his rest.

Edwin John Pratt.

A Consecration

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
Riding triumphantly laurelled to lap the fat of the years,—
Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears;

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din and the cries,
The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes.

Not the be-medalled Commander, beloved of the throne,
Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known.

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road, 10
The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load.

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired look-out.

Others may sing of the wind and the wealth and the mirth,
The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth;—
Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the colour, the glory, the gold;
Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mould.
Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold—
Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told.

John Masefield.

Cargoes

Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
With a cargo of ivory,
And apes and peacocks,
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,
With a cargo of diamonds,
Emeralds, amethysts,
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.

Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rails, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

John Masefield.

Christmas at Sea

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could stand,
The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tack'd and tack'd between the South Head and the North;
All day we haul'd the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tack'd from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared;
But every tack we made we brought the North Head close aboard;
So's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore home;

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volley'd out;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer;
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves
Go dancing round the china plates that stand upon the shelves!

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea;
And O the wicked fool I seem'd, in every kind of way,
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
'All hands to loose topgallant sails!' I heard the captain call.
'By the Lord, she'll never stand it,' our first mate Jackson cried.
. . . 'It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson,' he replied.

She stagger'd to her bearings, but the sails were new and good,
And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she understood.
As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We clear'd the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

The 'Revenge'

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

I

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!'
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: ''Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?'

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I know you are no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!

There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.
Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah, and so
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;
For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
And the little *Revenge* ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,
Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,

Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and went
Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;
And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,
For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,
And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,
But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.
Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,
Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;
Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.
For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

X

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said 'Fight on! fight on!'

XI

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay around us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and cold
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night

As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'

XII

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply:
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,
And they mann'd the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

Lord Tennyson.

The Sea-King's Burial

'My strength is failing fast,'
Said the Sea-king to his men;—
'I shall never sail the seas,
Like a conqueror again.

But while yet a drop remains
Of the life-blood in my veins,
Raise, oh raise me from the bed;—
Put the crown upon my head;—
Put my good sword in my hand;
And so lead me to the strand,
Where my ship at anchor rides
Steadily;
If I cannot end my life
In the bloody battle-strife,
Let me die as I have lived,
On the sea.'

They have raised King Balder up,
Put his crown upon his head;
They have sheathed his limbs in mail,
And the purple o'er him spread;
And amid the greeting rude
Of a gathering multitude,
Borne him slowly to the shore—
All the energy of yore
From his dim eyes flashing forth—
Old sea-lion of the North;
As he looked upon his ship
Riding free.
And on his forehead pale
Felt the cold refreshing gale,
And heard the welcome sound
Of the sea.

'Hurra! for mighty Balder!
As he lived, so will he die!
Hurra! hurra! for Balder!'
Said the crowd as he went by.
'He will perish on the wave,
Like the old Vikingr brave;
And in high Valhalla's halls

Hold eternal festivals,
And drink the blood-red draught
None but heroes ever quaffed,
With Odin and the spirits
Of the free.
In the fire or in the wreck,
He will die upon the deck
And be buried like a monarch
Of the sea.'

Old Balder heard their shouts
As they bore him to the beach;
And his fading eye grew bright
With the eloquence of speech,
As he heard the mighty roar
Of the people on the shore,
And the trumpets pealing round
With a bold triumphal sound,
And saw the flags afar
Of a hundred ships of war,
That were riding in the harbour
Gallantly.
And said Balder to his men—
And his pale cheek flushed again—
'I have lived, and I will die
On the sea.'

They have borne him to the ship
With a slow and solemn tread;
They have placed him on the deck
With his crown upon his head,
Where he sat as on a throne;
And have left him there alone,
With his anchor ready weigh'd,
And the snowy sails display'd
To the favouring wind once more
Blowing freshly from the shore;

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And have bidden him farewell
Tenderly;
Saying, 'King of mighty men,
We shall meet thee yet again,
In Valhalla, with the monarchs
Of the sea.'

Underneath him in the hold
They had placed the lighted brand;
And the fire was burning slow
As the vessel from the land,
Like a staghound from the slips,
Darted forth from out the ships;—
There was music in her sail
As it swell'd before the gale,
And a dashing at her prow
As it cleft the waves below,
And the good ship sped along,
Scudding free,
As on many a battle morn
In her time she had been borne,
To struggle and to conquer
On the sea.

And the King with sudden strength
Started up and paced the deck,
With his good sword for his staff,
And his robe around his neck;—
Once alone he waved his hand
To the people on the land
With a shout and joyous cry.
Once again they made reply
Till the loud, exulting cheer
Sounded faintly on his ear;
For the gale was o'er him blowing,
Fresh and free;

And ere yet an hour had pass'd,
He was driven before the blast,
And a storm was on his path
On the sea.

And still upon the deck—
While the storm about him rent,
King Balder paced about
Till his failing strength was spent.
Then he stopp'd awhile to rest—
Crossed his hands upon his breast,
And looked upward to the sky,
With a dim but dauntless eye;
And heard the tall mast creak,
And the fitful tempest speak
Shrill and fierce, to the billows
Rushing free;
And within himself, he said,
'I am coming, oh, ye dead!
To join you in Valhalla,
O'er the sea.

'So blow, ye tempests, blow,
And my spirit shall not quail;
I have fought with many a foe,
I have weathered many a gale;
And in this hour of death,
Ere I yield my fleeting breath,
Ere the fire now burning slow
Shall come rushing from below,
And this worn and wasted frame
Be devoted to the flame—
I will raise my voice in triumph,
Singing free;—
To the great All-Father's home
I am driving through the foam,
I am sailing to Valhalla,
O'er the sea.

'So blow, ye stormy winds—
And ye flames, ascend on high;—
In the easy, idle bed
Let the slave and coward die!
But give me the driving keel,
Clang of shields and flashing steel;—
Or my foot on foreign ground
With my enemies around!
Happy! happy thus I yield,
On the deck or on the field,
My last breath shouting, "On
To Victory!"
But since *this* has been denied,
They shall say that I have died
Without flinching, like a monarch
Of the sea.'

And Balder spake no more,
And no sound escaped his lip;—
And he looked, yet scarcely saw
The destruction of his ship;
Nor the fleet sparks mounting high,
Nor the glare upon the sky;—
Scarcely heard the billows dash,
Nor the burning timber crash;—
Scarcely felt the scorching heat
That was gathering at his feet,
Nor the fierce flames mounting o'er him
Greedily.
But the life was in him yet,
And the courage to forget
All his pain, in his triumph
On the sea.

Once alone a cry arose,
Half of anguish, half of pride,

As he sprang upon his feet,
With the flames on every side.
'I am coming!' said the King,
'Where the swords and bucklers ring—
Where the warrior lives again
With the souls of mighty men—
Where the weary find repose,
And the red wine ever flows:
I am coming, great All-Father,
Unto thee!
Unto Odin, unto Thor,
And the strong, true hearts of yore—
I am coming to Valhalla,
O'er the sea.'

Red and fierce upon the sky
Until midnight shone the glare,
And the burning ship drove on—
Like a meteor of the air.
She was driven and hurried past,
'Mid the roaring of the blast.
And of Balder, warrior-born,
Naught remained at break of morn
On the charr'd and blacken'd hull,
But some ashes, and a skull;
And still the vessel drifted
Heavily,
With a pale and hazy light
Until far into the night,
When the storm had spent its rage
On the sea.

Then the ocean ceased her strife
With the wild winds lull'd to rest
And a full, round, placid moon
Shed a halo on her breast;

And the burning ship still lay
On the deep sea, far away;
From her ribs of solid oak,
Pouring forth the flame and smoke;
Until, burnt through all her bulk
To the water's edge, the hulk
Down a thousand fathoms founder'd
Suddenly,
With a low and sullen sound,
While the billows sang around
Sad requiems for the monarch
Of the sea.

Charles MacKay.

Forty Singing Seamen

In our lands be Beeres and Lyons of dyvers colours as ye redd, grene, black, and white. And in our land be also unicornes and these Unicornes slee many Lyons. . . . Also there dare no man make a lye in our lande, for if he dyde he sholde incontynent be sleyn.—*Mediaeval Epistle of Pope Prester John.*

I

Across the seas of Wonderland to Mogadore we plodded,
Forty singing seamen in an old black barque,
And we landed in the twilight where a Polyphemus nodded
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow through the dark!
For his eye was growing mellow,
Rich and ripe and red and yellow,
As was time, since old Ulysses made him bellow in the dark!
Cho.—Since Ulysses bunged his eye up with a pine-torch in the dark!

II

Were they mountains in the gloaming or the giant's ugly shoulders
Just beneath the rolling eyeball, with its bleared and vinous glow,
Red and yellow o'er the purple of the pines among the boulders
And the shaggy horror brooding on the sullen slopes below,
Were they pines among the boulders
Or the hair upon his shoulders?
We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't know.
Cho.—We were simple singing seamen, so of course we couldn't know.

III

But we crossed the plain of poppies, and we came upon a fountain
Not of water, but of jewels, like a spray of leaping fire;
And behind it, in an emerald glade, beneath a golden mountain
There stood a crystal palace, for a sailor to admire;
For a troop of ghosts came round us,
Which with leaves of bay they crowned us,
Then with grog they well-nigh drowned us, to the depth of our desire!
Cho.—And 'twas very friendly of them, as a sailor can admire!

IV

There was music all about us, we were growing quite forgetful,
We were only singing seamen from the dirt of London-town,

Though the nectar that we swallowed seemed to vanish half regretful
As if we wasn't good enough to take such vittles down,
When we saw a sudden figure,
Tall and black as any nigger,
Like the devil—only bigger—drawing near us with a frown!
Cho.—Like the devil—but much bigger—and he wore a golden crown!

V

And 'What's all this?' he growls at us! With dignity we chaunted,
'Forty singing seamen, sir, as won't be put upon!'
'What? Englishmen?' he cries. 'Well, if ye don't mind being haunted,
Faith, you're welcome to my palace; I'm the famous Prester John!
Will ye walk into my palace?
I don't bear 'ee any malice!
One and all ye shall be welcome in the halls of Prester John!'
Cho.—So we walked into the palace and the halls of Prester John!

VI

Now the door was one great diamond and the hall a hollow ruby—
Big as Beachy Head, my lads, nay, bigger by a half!
And I sees the mate wi' mouth agape, a-staring like a booby,
And the skipper close behind him, with his tongue out like a calf!

Now the way to take it rightly
Was to walk along politely
Just as if you didn't notice—so I couldn't help but laugh!
Cho.—For they both forgot their manners and the crew was bound to laugh!

VII

But he took us through his palace, and, my lads, as I'm a sinner,
We walked into an opal like a sunset-coloured cloud—
'My dining-room,' he says, and, quick as light we saw a dinner
Spread before us by the fingers of a hidden fairy crowd;
And the skipper, swaying gently
After dinner, murmurs faintly,
'I looks to-wards you, Prester John, you've done us very proud!'
Cho.—And we drank his health with honours, for he *done* us *very* proud!

VIII

Then he walks us to his garden, where we sees a feathered demon
Very splendid and important on a sort of spicy tree!
'That's the Phoenix,' whispers Prester, 'which all eddicated seamen
Knows the only one existent, and *he's* waiting for to flee!
When his hundred years expire
Then he'll set hisself a-fire

And another from his ashes rise most beautiful to see!'
Cho.—With wings of rose and emerald most beautiful to see!

IX

Then he says, 'In yonder forest there's a little silver river,
And whosoever drinks of it, his youth shall never die!
The centuries go by, but Prester John endures for ever
With his music in the mountains and his magic on the sky!
While *your* hearts are growing colder,
While your world is growing older,
There's a magic in the distance, where the sea-line meets the sky.'
Cho.—It shall call to singing seamen till the fount o' song is dry!

X

So we thought we'd up and seek it, but that forest fair defied us,—
First a crimson leopard laughs at us most horrible to see,
Then a sea-green lion came and sniffed and licked his chops and eyed us,
While a red and yellow unicorn was dancing round a tree!
We was trying to look thinner,
Which was hard, because our dinner
Must ha' made us very tempting to a cat o' high degree!
Cho.—Must ha' made us very tempting to the whole menargeree!

XI

So we scuttled from that forest and across the poppy-meadows
Where the awful shaggy horror brooded o'er us in the dark!
And we pushes out from shore again a-jumping at our shadows
And pulls away most joyful to the old black barque!
And home again we plodded
While the Polyphemus nodded
With his battered moon-eye winking red and yellow through the dark.
Cho.—Oh, the moon above the mountains, red and yellow through the dark!

XII

Across the seas of Wonderland to London-town we blundered,
Forty singing seamen as was puzzled for to know
If the visions that we saw was caused by—here again we pondered 91
A tipple in a vision forty thousand years ago.
Could the grog we *dreamt* we swallowed
Make us *dream* of all that followed?
We were only simple seamen, so of course we didn't know!
Cho.—We were simple singing seamen, so of course we could not know!

Alfred Noyes.

The Child and the Mariner

A DEAR old couple my grandparents were,
And kind to all dumb things; they saw in Heaven
The lamb that Jesus petted when a child;
Their faith was never draped by Doubt: to them

Death was a rainbow in Eternity,
That promised everlasting brightness soon.
An old seafaring man was he; a rough
Old man, but kind; and hairy, like the nut
Full of sweet milk. All day on shore he watched
The winds for sailors' wives, and told what ships
Enjoyed fair weather, and what ships had storms;
He watched the sky, and he could tell for sure
What afternoons would follow stormy morns,
If quiet nights would end wild afternoons.
He leapt away from scandal with a roar,
And if a whisper still possessed his mind,
He walked about and cursed it for a plague.
He took offence at Heaven when beggars passed,
And sternly called them back to give them help.
In this old captain's house I lived, and things
That house contained were in ships' cabins once;
Sea-shells and charts and pebbles, model ships;
Green weeds, dried fishes stuffed, and coral stalks;
Old wooden trunks with handles of spliced rope,
With copper saucers full of monies strange,
That seemed the savings of dead men, not touched
To keep them warm since their real owners died;
Strings of red beads, methought were dipped in blood,
And swinging lamps, as though the house might move;
An ivory lighthouse built on ivory rocks,
The bones of fishes and three bottled ships.
And many a thing was there which sailors make
In idle hours, when on long voyages,
Of marvellous patience, to no lovely end.
And on those charts I saw the small black dots
That were called islands, and I knew they had
Turtles and palms, and pirates' buried gold.
There came a stranger to my grandad's house,
The old man's nephew, a seafarer too;
A big, strong able man who could have walked
Twm Barlum's hill all clad in iron mail;

So strong he could have made one man his club
To knock down others—Henry was his name,
No other name was uttered by his kin.
And here he was, in sooth ill-clad, but oh,
Thought I, what secrets of the sea are his!
This man knows coral islands in the sea,
And dusky girls heart-broken for white men;
This sailor knows of wondrous lands afar,
More rich than Spain, when the Phoenicians shipped
Silver for common ballast, and they saw 51
Horses at silver mangers eating grain;
This man has seen the wind blow up a mermaid's hair
Which, like a golden serpent, reared and stretched
To feel the air away beyond her head.
He begged my pennies, which I gave with joy—
He will most certainly return some time
A self-made king of some new land, and rich.
Alas that he, the hero of my dreams,
Should be his people's scorn; for they had rose 60
To proud command of ships, whilst he had toiled
Before the mast for years, and well content;
Him they despised, and only Death could bring
A likeness in his face to show like them.
For he drank all his pay, nor went to sea
As long as ale was easy got on shore.
Now, in his last long voyage he had sailed
From Plymouth Sound to where sweet odours fan
The Cingalese at work, and then back home—
But came not near his kin till pay was spent. 70
He was not old, yet seemed so; for his face
Looked like the drowned man's in the morgue, when it
Has struck the wooden wharves and keels of ships.
And all his flesh was pricked with Indian ink,
His body marked as rare and delicate
As dead men struck by lightning under trees,
And pictured with fine twigs and curlèd ferns;
Chains on his neck and anchors on his arms;

Rings on his fingers, bracelets on his wrist;
And on his breast the *Jane* of Appledore
Was schooner rigged, and in full sail at sea.
He could not whisper with his strong hoarse voice,
No more than could a horse creep quietly;
He laughed to scorn the men that muffled close
For fear of wind, till all their neck was hid,
Like Indian corn wrapped up in long green leaves;
He knew no flowers but seaweeds brown and green,
He knew no birds but those that followed ships.
Full well he knew the water-world; he heard
A grander music there than we on land,
When organ shakes a church; swore he would make
The sea his home, though it was always roused
By such wild storms as never leave Cape Horn;
Happy to hear the tempest grunt and squeal
Like pigs heard dying in a slaughter-house.
A true-born mariner, and this his hope—
His coffin would be what his cradle was,
A boat to drown in and be sunk at sea;
To drown at sea and lie a dainty corpse
Salted and iced in Neptune's larder deep.
This man despised small coasters, fishing-smacks,
He scorned those sailors who at night and morn
Can see the coast, when in their little boats
They go a six days' voyage and are back
Home with their wives for every Sabbath day.
Much did he talk of tankards of old beer,
And bottled stuff he drank in other lands,
Which was a liquid fire like Hell to gulp,
But Paradise to sip.
                                        And so he talked;
Nor did those people listen with more awe
To Lazarus—whom they had seen stone-dead—
Than did we urchins to that seaman's voice.
He many a tale of wonder told: of where,
At Argostoli, Cephalonia's sea

Ran over the earth's lip in heavy floods;
And then again of how the strange Chinese
Conversed much as our homely Blackbirds sing.
He told us how he sailed in one old ship
Near that volcano Martinque, whose power
Shook like dry leaves the whole Caribbean seas;
And made the sun set in a sea of fire
Which only half was his; and dust was thick
On deck, and stones were pelted at the mast.
So, as we walked along, that seaman dropped
Into my greedy ears such words that sleep
Stood at my pillow half the night perplexed.
He told how isles sprang up and sank again,
Between short voyages, to his amaze;
How they did come and go, and cheated charts;
Told how a crew was cursed when one man killed
A bird that perched upon a moving barque;
And how the sea's sharp needles, firm and strong,
Ripped open the bellies of big, iron ships;
Of mighty icebergs in the Northern seas,
That haunt the far horizon like white ghosts.
He told of waves that left a ship so high
That birds could pass from starboard unto port
Under her dripping keel.
                                        Oh, it was sweet
To hear that seaman tell such wondrous tales:
How deep the sea in parts, that drownèd men
Must go a long way to their graves and sink
Day after day, and wander with the tides.
He spake of his own deeds; of how he sailed
One summer's night along the Bosphorus,
And he—who knew no music like the wash
Of waves against a ship, or wind in shrouds—
Heard then the music on that woody shore
Of nightingales, and feared to leave the deck,
He thought 'twas sailing into Paradise.
To hear these stories all we urchins placed

Our pennies in that seaman's ready hand;
Until one morn he signed for a long cruise,
And sailed away—we never saw him more.
Could such a man sink in the sea unknown?
Nay, he had found a land with something rich,
That kept his eyes turned inland for his life.
'A damn bad sailor and a landshark too,
No good in port or out'—my grandad said.

W. H. Davies.

Seumas Beg

A MAN was sitting underneath a tree
Outside the village; and he asked me what
Name was upon this place; and said that he
Was never here before—He told a lot

Of stories to me too. His nose was flat!
I asked him how it happened, and he said
—The first mate of the Holy Ghost did that
With a marling-spike one day; but he was dead,

And jolly good job too; and he'd have gone
A long way to have killed him—Oh, he had
A gold ring in one ear; the other one
'Was bit off by a crocodile, bedad!'—

That's what he said. He taught me how to chew!
He was a real nice man! He liked me too!

James Stephens.

The Passing of Arthur

THAT story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made and latest left of all the knights,
Told, when the man was no more than a voice
In the white winter of his age, to those
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

For on their march to westward, Bedivere,
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,
Heard in his tent the moanings of the King:

'I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark'd Him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
And have not power to see it as it is:
Perchance, because we see not to the close;—
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain;
And all whereon I lean'd in wife and friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death:
Nay—God my Christ—I pass but shall not die.'

Before that last weird battle in the west,
There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain kill'd
In Lancelots' war, the ghost of Gawain blown
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling 'Hollow, hollow all delight!
Hail, king! to-morrow thou shalt pass away.
Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee.
And I am blown along a wandering wind,
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight.'
And fainter onward, like wild birds that change
Their season in the night and wail their way
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream

Shrill'd; but in going mingled with dim cries
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
As of some lonely city sack'd by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and call'd,
'Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,
Thine, Gawain, was the voice—are these dim cries
Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?'

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake:
'O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
But in their stead thy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud
For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise—
I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people, and knights
Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
Right well in heart they know thee for the King.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old.'

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Far other is this battle in the west
Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,
And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,
Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,
And shook him thro' the north. Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.

Yet let me hence, and find or feel a way
Thro' this blind haze, which ever since I saw
One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world.'

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
And ever push'd Sir Modred, league by league,
Back to the sunset bound of Lyonnesse—
A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a mountain sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,
And he that fled no further fly the King;
And there, that day when the great light of heaven
Burn'd at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.
A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea:
Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
With formless fear; and ev'n on Arthur fell
Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought,
For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;
And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fights,
And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battleaxes on shatter'd helms, and shrieks

After the Christ, of those who falling down
Look'd up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
Oaths, insult, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, labouring of the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or thro' death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
Grew drearier towards twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field
Of battle: but no man was moving there;
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
And shiver'd brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores
The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the King:

'Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm wherein we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,
My dead, as tho' they had not died for me?—
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fall'n
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
Behold, I seem but King among the dead.'

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere: 'My King,
King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,
There also will I worship thee as King.
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought
The heathen back among us, yonder stands,
Modred, unharm'd, the traitor of thine house.'

Then spake the King: 'My house hath been my doom.
But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
My house are rather they who sware my vows,
Yea, even while they brake them, own'd me King.
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purport of my throne hath fail'd,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.
King am I, whatsoever be their cry;
And one last act of kinghood shalt thou see
Yet, ere I pass.' And uttering this the King
Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege
Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword
Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonnesse about their lord,
King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more; but let what will be, be.
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm—
A little thing may harm a wounded man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur, 220
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewelry. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd 230
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale: 240
'Thou has betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer as beseem'd
Thy fëalty, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? But were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying King,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea,
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words;
They took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter morn.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge.'
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—

That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust:
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer

Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst—if indeed I go
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had past for evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
Amazed him, and he groan'd, 'The King is gone.'
And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme,
'From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

Whereat he slowly turn'd and slowly clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
Thence mark'd the black hull moving yet, and cried,
'He passes to be King among the dead,
And after healing of his grievous wound
He comes again; but—if he come no more—
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black boat,
Who shriek'd and wail'd, the three whereat we gazed
On that high day, when, clothed with living light,

They stood before his throne in silence, friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?'

Then from the dawn it seem'd there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
E'en to the highest he could climb, and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
Or thought he saw, the speck that bare the King,
Down that long water opening on the deep
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
From less to less and vanish into light.
And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

Lord Tennyson.

Miniver Cheevy

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
He wept that he was ever born,
And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
The vision of a warrior bold
Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
  That made so many a name so fragrant;
He mourned Romance, now on the town,
  And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
  Albeit he had never seen one;
He would have sinned incessantly
  Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
  And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
He missed the mediæval grace
  Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
  But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
  And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
  Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
  And kept on drinking.

Edwin Arlington Robinson.

God's Judgement on a Wicked Bishop

The summer and autumn had been so wet,
That in winter the corn was growing yet,
'Twas a piteous sight to see all around
The grain lie rotting on the ground.

Every day the starving poor
Crowded around Bishop Hatto's door,
For he had a plentiful last-year's store,
And all the neighbourhood could tell
His granaries were furnish'd well.

At last Bishop Hatto appointed a day
To quiet the poor without delay;
He bade them to his great Barn repair,
And they should have food for the winter there.

Rejoiced such tidings good to hear,
The poor folk flock'd from far and near;
The great Barn was full as it could hold
Of women and children, and young and old.

Then when he saw it could hold no more,
Bishop Hatto he made fast the door;
And while for mercy on Christ they call,
He set fire to the Barn and burnt them all.

'I' faith 'tis an excellent bonfire!' quoth he,
'And the country is greatly obliged to me,
For ridding it in these times forlorn
Of Rats that only consume the corn.'

So then to his palace returned he,
And he sat down to supper merrily,
And he slept that night like an innocent man;
But Bishop Hatto never slept again.

In the morning as he enter'd the hall
Where his picture hung against the wall,
A sweat like death all over him came,
For the Rats had eaten it out of the frame.

As he look'd there came a man from his farm—
He had a countenance white with alarm;
'My Lord, I open'd your granaries this morn,
And the Rats had eaten all your corn.'

Another came running presently,
And he was pale as pale could be,
'Fly! my Lord Bishop, fly,' quoth he,
'Ten thousand rats are coming this way, . .
The Lord forgive you for yesterday!'

'I'll go to my tower on the Rhine,' replied he,
' 'Tis the safest place in Germany;
The walls are high and the shores are steep,
And the stream is strong and the water deep.'

Bishop Hatto fearfully hasten'd away,
And he crosst the Rhine without delay,
And reach'd his tower, and barr'd with care
All the windows, doors, and loop-holes there.

He laid him down and closed his eyes; . .
But soon a scream made him arise,
He started and saw two eyes of flame
On his pillow from whence the screaming came.

He listen'd and look'd; . . . it was only the Cat;
But the Bishop he grew more fearful for that,
For she sat screaming, mad with fear
At the Army of Rats that were drawing near.

For they have swum over the river so deep,
And they have climb'd the shores so steep,
And up the Tower their way is bent,
To do the work for which they were sent.

They are not to be told by the dozen or score,
By thousands they come, and by myriads and more,
Such numbers had never been heard of before,
Such a judgement had never been witness'd of yore.

Down on his knees the Bishop fell,
And faster and faster his beads did he tell,
As louder and louder drawing near
The gnawing of their teeth he could hear.

And in at the windows and in at the door,
And through the walls helter-skelter they pour,
And down from the ceiling and up through the floor,
From the right and the left, from behind and before,

From within and without, from above and below,
And all at once to the Bishop they go.

They had whetted their teeth against the stones,
And now they pick the Bishop's bones;
They gnaw'd the flesh from every limb,
For they were sent to do judgement on him!

Robert Southey.

Hem and Haw

Hem and Haw were the sons of sin,
Created to shally and shirk;
Hem lay 'round and Haw looked on
While God did all the work.

Hem was a fogey, and Haw was a prig,
For both had the dull, dull mind;
And whenever they found a thing to do,
They yammered and went it blind.

Hem was the father of bigots and bores;
As the sands of the sea were they.
And Haw was the father of all the tribe
Who criticize to-day.

But God was an artist from the first,
And knew what he was about;
While over his shoulder sneered these two,
And advised him to rub it out.

They prophesied ruin ere man was made:
'Such folly must surely fail!'
And when he was done, 'Do you think, my Lord,
He's better without a tail?'

And still in the honest working world,
With posture and hint and smirk,
These sons of the devil are standing by
While Man does all the work.

They balk endeavour and baffle reform
In the sacred name of the law;
And over the quavering voice of Hem
Is the droning voice of Haw.

Bliss Carman.

The Mouse that Gnawed the Oak-tree Down

The mouse that gnawed the oak-tree down
Began his task in early life.
He kept so busy with his teeth
He had no time to take a wife.

He gnawed and gnawed through sun and rain
When the ambitious fit was on,
Then rested in the sawdust till
A month of idleness had gone.

He did not move about to hunt
The coteries of mousie-men.
He was a snail-paced, stupid thing
Until he cared to gnaw again.

The mouse that gnawed the oak-tree down,
When that tough foe was at his feet—
Found in the stump no angel-cake
Nor buttered bread, nor cheese nor meat—
The forest-roof let in the sky.
'This light is worth the work,' said he.
'I'll make this ancient swamp more light,'
And started on another tree.

Vachel Lindsay.

Sam's Three Wishes

OR LIFE'S LITTLE WHIRLIGIG

'I'm thinking and thinking,' said old Sam Shore,
''Twere somebody *knocking* I heard at the door.'

From the clock popped the cuckoo and cuckooed out
    eight,
As there in his chair he wondering sate . . .
'There's no one I knows on would come so late,
A-clicking the latch of an empty house
With nobbut inside 'un but me and a mouse . . .
Maybe a-waking in sleep I be,
And 'twere out of a dream came that tapping to me.'
At length he cautiously rose and went,
And with thumb upon latch awhile listening bent,
Then slowly drew open the door. And behold!
There stood a Fairy!—all green and gold,
Mantled up warm against dark and cold,
And smiling up into his candle shine,
Lips like wax, and cheeks like wine,
As saucy and winsome a thing to see
As are linden buds on a linden tree.

Stock-still in the doorway stood simple Sam
A-ducking his head, with 'Good-e'en to 'ee, Ma'am.'
Dame Fairy she nods, and cries clear and sweet,
''Tis a *very* good-e'en, sir, when such folks meet.
I know thee, Sam, though thou wist not of me,
And I'm come in late gloaming to speak with thee;
Though my eyes do dazzle at glint of your rush,
All under this pretty green fuchsia bush.'

Sam ducked once more, smiling simple and slow.
Like the warbling of birds her words did flow,
And she laughed, very merry, to see how true
Shone the old man's kindness his courtesy through.
And she nodded her head, and the stars on high
Sparkled down on her smallness from out of the sky.

'A friend is a friend, Sam, and wonderful pleasant,
And I'm come for old sake's sake to bring thee a present.
Three wishes, three wishes are thine, Sam Shore.
Just three wishes—and wish no more.

All for because, ruby-ripe to see,
The pixy-pears burn in yon hawthorn tree,
And your old milch cow, wheresoever she goes,
Never crops over the fairy-knowes.
Ay, Sam, thou art old and thy house is lone,
But there's Potencies round thee, and here is one!'

Poor Sam, he stared: and the stars o'erhead
A shimmering light on the elm-tops shed.
Like rilling of water her voice rang sweet,
And the night-wind sighed at the sound of it.

He frowned—glanced back at the empty grate,
And shook very slowly his grey old pate:
'Three wishes, my dear! Why, I scarcely knows
Which be my crany and which my toes!
But I thank 'ee, Ma'am, kindly, and this I'd say,
That the night of your passing is Michaelmas Day;
And if it were company come on a sudden,
Why, I'd ax for a fat goose to fry in the oven!'

And lo, and forsooth! as the words he was uttering,
A rich puff of air set his candle a-guttering,
And there rose in the kitchen a sizzling and sputtering,
With a crackling of sparks and of flames a great fluttering,
And—of which there could not be two opinions—
A smoking-hot savour of sage and onions.
Beam, wall and flagstones the kitchen was lit,
Every dark corner and cranny of it,
With the blaze from the hearthstone. Copper and brass
Winked back the winking of platter and glass.
And a wonderful squeaking of mice went up
At the smell of a Michaelmas supper to sup—
Unctuous odours that wreathed and swirled
Where'er frisked a whisker or mouse-tail twirled,

While out of the chimney up into the night
That ne'er-to-be-snuffed-too-much smoke took flight.
'That's one,' says the Fairy, finger on thumb,
'So now, Mister Sam, there's but two to come!'
She leaned her head sidelong; she lifted her chin,
With a twinkling of eye from the radiance within.
Poor Sam stood stounded; he says, says he,
'I *wish* my old Mother was back with me,
For if there was one thing she couldn't refuse,
'Twas a sweet thick slice from the breast of a goose.'
But his cheek grew stiff and his eyes stared bright
For there, on her stick, pushing out of the night,
Tap-tapping along, herself and no other,
Came who but the shape of his dear old Mother!
Straight into the kitchen she hastened and went,
Her breath coming quick as if all but spent,
'Why Sam,' says she, 'the bird be turning,
For my nose tells I that the skin's a-burning!'
And down at the oven the ghost of her sat
And basted the goose with the boiling fat.

'Oho,' cries the Fairy, sweet and small,
'Another wish gone will leave nothing at all.'
And Sam sighs, 'Bless 'ee, Ma'am, keep the other,
There's nowt that I want now I have my Mother.'

But the Fairy laughs softly, and says, says she,
'There's one wish left, Sam; I promised 'ee three.
Hasten your wits, the hour creeps on,
There's calling afield and I'm soon to be gone.
Soon as haps midnight the cocks will crow,
And me to the gathering and feasting must go.'

Sam gazed at his Mother—withered and wan,
The rose in her cheek, her bright hair, gone,
And her poor old back bent double with years—
And he scarce could speak for the salt, salt tears.

'Well, well,' he says, 'I'm unspeakable glad:
But—it bain't quite the same as when I was a lad.
There's joy and there's joy, Ma'am, but to tell 'ee the truth
There's none can compare with the joy of one's youth.
And if it was possible, how could I choose
But be back in boy's breeches to eat the goose;
And all the old things, and my Mother the most,
To shine again real as my own gatepost!
What wouldn't I give, too, to see again wag
The dumpity tail of my old dog, Shag!
Your kindness, Ma'am, but all wishing was vain
Unless us can both be young again.'
A shrill faint laughter from nowhere came. . . .
Empty the dark in the candle-flame. . . .
And there stood our Sam, about four foot high,
Snub nose, shock hair, and round blue eye.
Breeches and braces and coat of him too,
Shirt on his back, and each clodhopping shoe
Had shrunk to a nicety—button and hem
To fit the small Sammie tucked up into them.

There was his Mother, too, smooth, clear cheek,
Lips as sooth as a blackbird's beak;
Pretty arched eyebrows, the daintiest nose—
While the smoke of the baking deliciously rose.

'Come, Sammie,' she cries, 'your old Mammikin's joy,
Climb up on your stool, supper's ready, my boy.
Bring in the candle, and shut out the night;
There's goose, baked 'taties and cabbage to bite.
Why, bless the wee lamb, he's all shiver and shake,
And you'd think from the look of him scarcely awake!
If 'ee glour wi' those eyes, Sam, so dark and round,
The elves will away with 'ee, I'll be bound!'
So Sam and his Mother by wishes three
Were made just as happy as happy can be.

And there—with a bumpity tail to wag—
Set laughing with tongue out, their old dog, Shag.
To clatter of platter, bones, giblets and juice,
Between them they ate up the whole of the goose.

But time is a river for ever in flow,
The weeks went by as the weeks must go;
Soon fifty-two to a year did grow.
The long years passed, one after another,
Making older and older our Sam and his Mother;
And, alas and alack, with nine of them gone,
Poor Shag lay asleep again under a stone.
And a sorrowful dread would sometimes creep
Into Sam's dreams, as he lay asleep,
That his Mother was lost, and away he'd fare,
Calling her, calling her, everywhere,
In dark, in rain, by roads unknown,
Under echoing hills, and alone, alone.
What bliss in the morning to wake and see
The sun shining green in the linden tree,
And out of that dream's dark shadowiness
To slip in on his Mother and give her a kiss,
Then go whistling off in the dew to hear
The thrushes all mocking him, sweet and clear.

Still, moon after moon from heaven above
Shone on Mother and son, and made light of love.
Her roses faded, her pretty brown hair
Had sorrowful grey in it everywhere.
And at last she died, and was laid to rest,
Her tired hands crossed on her shrunken breast.
And Sam, now lonely, lived on and on
Till most of his workaday life seemed gone.

Yet spring came again, with its green and blue,
And presently summer's wild roses too,
Pinks, Sweet-William, and sops-in-wine,
Blackberry, lavender, eglantine.

And when these had blossomed and gone their way,
'Twas apples and daisies and Michaelmas Day—
Yes, spider-webs, dew, and haws in the may,
And seraphs singing in Michaelmas Day.

Sam worked all morning and *couldn't* get rest
For a kind of a feeling of grief in his breast.
And yet, not grief, but something more
Like the thought that what happens has happened before.
He fed the chickens, he fed the sow,
On a three-legged stool sate down to the cow,
With a pail 'twixt his legs in the green in the meadow,
Under the elm trees' lengthening shadow;
And woke at last with a smile and a sigh
To find he had milked his poor Jingo dry.

As dusk set in, even the birds did seem
To be calling and calling from out of a dream.
He chopped up kindling, shut up his shed,
In a bucket of well-water soused his head
To freshen his eyes up a little and make
The drowsy old wits of him wider awake.
As neat as a womanless creature is able
He swept up his hearthstone and laid the table.
And then o'er his platter and mug, if you please,
Sate gloomily grooming at loaf and cheese—
Gooming and gooming as if the mere sight
Of his victuals could satisfy appetite!
And the longer and longer he looked at them
The slimmer slimmed upward his candle flame,
Blue in the air. And when squeaked a mouse,
'Twas loud as a trump in the hush of the house.
Then, sudden, a soft little wind puffed by,
'Twixt the thick-thatched roof and the star-sown sky;
And died. And then
That deep, dead, wonderful silence again.

Then—soft as a rattle a-counting her seeds
In the midst of a tangle of withered-up-weeds—
Came a faint, faint knocking, a rustle like silk,
And a breath at the keyhole as soft as milk—
Still as the flit of a moth. And then . . . 210
That infinitesimal knocking again.

Sam lifted his chin from his fists. He listened.
His wandering eyes in the candle glistened.
Then slowly, slowly, rolled round by degrees—
And there sat a mouse on the top of his cheese.
He stared at this Midget, and it at him,
Over the edge of his mug's round rim,
And—as if it were Christian—he says, 'Did 'ee hear
A faint little tap-tap-tap-tapping, my dear?

'You was at supper and me in a maze; 220
'Tis dark for a caller in these lone days,
There's nowt in the larder. We're both of us old,
And all of my loved ones sleep under the mould,
And yet—and yet—as I've told 'ee before . . .'

But if Sam's story you'd read to the end,
Turn back to page one, and press onward, dear friend;
Yes, if you would stave the last note of this song,
Turn back to page primus, and warble along!
For all sober records of life (come to write 'em)
Are bound to continue—well, ad infinitum. 230

Walter de la Mare.

The Snare

I HEAR a sudden cry of pain!
There is a rabbit in a snare:
Now I hear the cry again,
But I cannot tell from where.

But I cannot tell from where
He is calling out for aid!
Crying on the frightened air,
Making everything afraid!

Making everything afraid!
Wrinkling up his little face!
As he cries again for aid;
—And I cannot find the place!

And I cannot find the place
Where his paw is in the snare!
Little One! Oh, Little One,
I am searching everywhere!

James Stephens.

The Birds of Killingworth

It was the season, when through all the land
The merle and mavis build, and building sing
Those lovely lyrics, written by His hand,
Whom Saxon Cædmon calls the Blitheheart King;
When on the boughs the purple buds expand,
The banners of the vanguard of the Spring,
And rivulets, rejoicing, rush and leap,
And wave their fluttering signals from the steep.

The robin and the bluebird, piping loud,
Filled all the blossoming orchards with their glee;
The sparrows chirped as if they still were proud
Their race in Holy Writ should mentioned be;
And hungry crows, assembled in a crowd,
Clamoured their piteous prayer incessantly,
Knowing who hears the raven's cry, and said:
'Give us, O Lord, this day our daily bread!'

Across the Sound the birds of passage sailed,
Speaking some unknown language strange and sweet

Of tropic isle remote, and passing hailed
  The village with the cheers of all their fleet;
Or quarrelling together, laughed and railed
  Like foreign sailors, landed in the street
Of seaport town, and with outlandish noise
Of oaths and gibberish frightening girls and boys.

Thus came the jocund Spring in Killingworth,
  In fabulous days, some hundred years ago;
And thrifty farmers, as they tilled the earth,
  Heard with alarm the cawing of the crow,
That mingled with the universal mirth,
  Cassandra-like, prognosticating woe;
They shook their heads, and doomed with dreadful words
To swift destruction the whole race of birds.

And a town-meeting was convened straightway
  To set a price upon the guilty heads
Of these marauders, who, in lieu of pay,
  Levied blackmail upon the garden beds
And cornfields, and beheld without dismay
  The awful scarecrow, with his fluttering shreds;
The skeleton that waited at their feast,
Whereby their sinful pleasure was increased.

Then from his house, a temple painted white,
  With fluted columns, and a roof of red,
The Squire came forth, august and splendid sight!
  Slowly descending, with majestic tread,
Three flights of steps, nor looking left nor right,
  Down the long street he walked, as one who said,
'A town that boasts inhabitants like me
Can have no lack of good society!'

The Parson, too, appeared, a man austere,
  The instinct of whose nature was to kill;
The wrath of God he preached from year to year,
  And read, with fervour, Edwards on the Will;

His favourite pastime was to slay the deer
In summer on some Adirondac hill;
E'en now, while walking down the rural lane,
He lopped the wayside lillies with his cane.

From the Academy, whose belfry crowned
The hill of Science with its vane of brass,
Came the Preceptor, gazing idly round,
Now at the clouds, and now at the green grass,
And all absorbed in reveries profound
Of fair Almira in the upper class,
Who was, as in a sonnet he had said,
As pure as water, and as good as bread.

And next the Deacon issued from his door,
In his voluminous neckcloth white as snow;
A suit of sable bombazine he wore;
His form was ponderous, and his step was slow;
There never was so wise a man before;
He seemed the incarnate 'Well, I told you so!'
And to perpetuate his great renown
There was a street named after him in town.

These came together in the new town-hall,
With sundry farmers from the region round.
The Squire presided, dignified and tall,
His air impressive and his reasoning sound:
Ill fared it with the birds, both great and small;
Hardly a friend in all that crowd they found,
But enemies enough, who every one
Charged them with all the crimes beneath the sun.

When they had ended, from his place apart,
Rose the Preceptor, to redress the wrong,
And trembling like a steed before the start,
Looked round bewildered on the expectant throng;
Then thought of fair Almira, and took heart
To speak out what was in him, clear and strong,

Alike regardless of their smile or frown,
And quite determined not to be laughed down.

'Plato, anticipating the Reviewers,
From his Republic banished without pity
The Poets; in this little town of yours,
You put to death, by means of a Committee,
The ballad-singers and the Troubadours,
The street-musicians of the heavenly city,—
The birds,—who make sweet music for us all
In our dark hours, as David did for Saul.

'The thrush that carols at the dawn of day
From the green steeples of the piny wood;
The oriole in the elm; the noisy jay,
Jargoning like a foreigner at his food;
The bluebird balanced on some topmost spray,
Flooding with melody the neighbourhood;
Linnet and meadow-lark, and all the throng
That dwell in nests, and have the gift of song:

'You slay them all! and wherefore? for the gain
Of a scant handful more or less of wheat,
Or rye, or barley, or some other grain,
Scratched up at random by industrious feet,
Searching for worm or weevil after rain!
Or a few cherries, that are not so sweet
As are the songs these uninvited guests
Sing at their feast with comfortable breasts.

'Do you ne'er think what wondrous beings these?
Do you ne'er think who made them, and who taught
The dialect they speak, where melodies
Alone are the interpreters of thought?
Whose household words are songs in many keys,
Sweeter than instrument of man e'er caught!
Whose habitations in the tree-tops even
Are half-way houses on the road to heaven!

'Think, every morning when the sun peeps through
  The dim, leaf-latticed windows of the grove,
How jubilant the happy birds renew
  Their old, melodious madrigals of love!
And when you think of this, remember too
  'Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

'Think of your woods and orchards without birds!
  Of empty nests that cling to boughs and beams
As in an idiot's brain remembered words
  Hang empty 'mid the cobwebs of his dreams!
Will bleat of flocks or bellowing of herds
  Make up for the lost music, when your teams
Drag home the stingy harvest, and no more
  The feathered gleaners follow to your door?

'What! would you rather see the incessant stir
  Of insects in the windrows of the hay,
And hear the locust and the grasshopper
  Their melancholy hurdy-gurdies play?
Is this more pleasant to you than the whirr
  Of meadow-lark, and her sweet roundelay,
Or twitter of little field-fares, as you take
Your nooning in the shade of bush and brake?

'You call them thieves and pillagers; but know,
  They are the winged wardens of your farms,
Who from the cornfields drive the insidious foe,
  And from your harvests keep a hundred harms;
Even the blackest of them all, the crow,
  Renders good service as your man-at-arms,
Crushing the beetle in his coat of mail,
And crying havoc on the slug and snail.

'How can I teach your children gentleness,
  And mercy to the weak, and reverence

For Life, which, in its weakness or excess,
  Is still a gleam of God's omnipotence,
Or Death, which, seeming darkness, is no less
  The self-same light, although averted hence,
When by your laws, your actions, and your speech,
You contradict the very things I teach?'

With this he closed; and through the audience went
  A murmur, like the rustle of dead leaves;
The farmers laughed and nodded, and some bent
  Their yellow heads together like their sheaves;
Men have no faith in fine-spun sentiment
  Who put their trust in bullocks and in beeves.
The birds were doomed; and, as the record shows,
A bounty offered for the heads of crows.

There was another audience out of reach,
  Who had no voice nor vote in making laws,
But in the papers read his little speech,
  And crowned his modest temples with applause;
They made him conscious, each one more than each,
  He still was victor, vanquished in their cause.
Sweetest of all the applause he won from thee,
O fair Almira at the Academy!

And so the dreadful massacre began;
  O'er fields and orchards, and o'er woodland crests,
The ceaseless fusillade of terror ran.
  Dead fell the birds, with blood-stains on their breasts,
Or wounded crept away from sight of man,
  While the young died of famine in their nests;
A slaughter to be told in groans, not words,
The very St. Bartholomew of Birds!

The Summer came, and all the birds were dead;
  The days were like hot coals; the very ground
Was burned to ashes; in the orchards fed
  Myriads of caterpillars, and around

The cultivated fields and garden beds
Hosts of devouring insects crawled, and found
No foe to check their march, till they had made
The land a desert without leaf or shade.

Devoured by worms, like Herod, was the town,
Because, like Herod, it had ruthlessly
Slaughtered the Innocents. From the trees spun down
The cankerworms upon the passers-by,
Upon each woman's bonnet, shawl, and gown,
Who shook them off with just a little cry;
They were the terror of each favourite walk,
The endless theme of all the village talk.

The farmers grew impatient, but a few
Confessed their error, and would not complain,
For after all, the best thing one can do
When it is raining, is to let it rain.
Then they repealed the law, although they knew
It would not call the dead to life again;
As schoolboys, finding their mistake too late,
Draw a wet sponge across the accusing slate.

That year in Killingworth the Autumn came
Without the light of his majestic look,
The wonder of the falling tongues of flame,
The illumined pages of his Doomsday book.
A few lost leaves blushed crimson with their shame,
And drowned themselves despairing in the brook,
While the wild wind went moaning everywhere,
Lamenting the dead children of the air!

But the next Spring, a stranger sight was seen,
A sight that never yet by bard was sung,
As great a wonder as it would have been
If some dumb animal had found a tongue!
A wagon, overarched with evergreen,
Upon whose boughs were wicker cages hung,

All full of singing birds, came down the street,
Filling the air with music wild and sweet.

From all the country round these birds were brought,
By order of the town, with anxious quest,
And, loosened from their wicker prisons, sought
In woods and fields and places they loved best,
Singing loud canticles, which many thought
Were satires to the authorities addressed,
While others, listening in green lanes, averred
Such lovely music never had been heard!

But blither still and louder carolled they
Upon the morrow, for they seemed to know
It was the fair Almira's wedding-day,
And everywhere, around, above, below,
When the Preceptor bore his bride away,
Their songs burst forth in joyous overflow,
And a new heaven bent over a new earth
Amid the sunny farms of Killingworth.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The Last Antelope

BEHIND the board fence at the banker's house
The slender, tawn-gray creature starves and thirsts
In agony of fear. A dog may growl,
It cowers; the cockcrow shakes it with alarm.

White frost lay heavy on the buffalo grass
That winter morning when three graceful shapes
Slipped by the saddle-back across the ridge
Along the rutted pathway to the creek.
In former years the track was bare, and worn
With feet of upland creatures every day.
A boy spied these three outlaws. Two hours' chase,
Fifty pursuers, and the ways all stopped,—
Guns, dogs, and fences. Torn by the barbed wire,
Drilled by a dozen buckshot, one; the next,

O'erheaped by snapping jaws, cried piteously
An instant; but the last on treacherous ice
Crashed through, a captive.

Ropes—the jolting wagon—
Its heart was audible as you touched its fur.

Behind the board fence at the banker's house,—
O, once it capered wild on dewy grass
In grace and glee of dancing, arrowy bounds!—
At the banker's house, behind the high board fence
The last slim pronghorn perishes of fear.

Edwin Ford Piper.

Robinson Crusoe's Story

THE night was thick and hazy
When the *Piccadilly Daisy*
Carried down the crew and captain in the sea;
And I think the water drowned 'em;
For they never, never found 'em,
And I know they didn't come ashore with me.

Oh! 'twas very sad and lonely
When I found myself the only
Population on this cultivated shore;
But I've made a little tavern
In a rocky little cavern,
And I sit and watch for people at the door.

I spent no time in looking
For a girl to do my cooking,
As I'm quite a clever hand at making stews;
But I had that fellow Friday,
Just to keep the tavern tidy,
And to put a Sunday polish on my shoes.

I have a little garden
That I'm cultivating lard in,
As the things I eat are rather tough and dry;

For I live on toasted lizards,
Prickly pears, and parrot gizzards,
And I'm really very fond of beetle-pie.

The clothes I had were furry,
And it made me fret and worry
When I found the moths were eating off the hair;
And I had to scrape and sand 'em,
And I boiled 'em and I tanned 'em,
Till I got the fine morocco suit I wear.

I sometimes seek diversion
In a family excursion
With a few domestic animals you see;
And we take along a carrot
As refreshment for the parrot,
And a little can of jungleberry tea.

Then we gather, as we travel,
Bits of moss and dirty gravel,
And we chip off little specimens of stone;
And we carry home as prizes
Funny bugs, of handy sizes,
Just to give the day a scientific tone.

If the roads are wet and muddy
We remain at home and study,—
For the Goat is very clever at a sum,—
And the Dog, instead of fighting,
Studies ornamental writing,
While the Cat is taking lessons on the drum.

We retired at eleven,
And we rise again at seven;
And I wish to call attention, as I close,
To the fact that all the scholars
Are correct about their collars,
And particular in turning out their toes.

Charles Edward Carryl.

King Robert of Sicily

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Apparelled in magnificent attire,
With retinue of many a knight and squire,
On St. John's eve, at vespers, proudly sat
And heard the priests chant the Magnificat.
And as he listened, o'er and o'er again
Repeated, like a burden or refrain,
He caught the words, '*Deposuit potentes*
De sede, et exaltavit humiles';
And slowly lifting up his kingly head
He to a learned clerk beside him said,
'What mean these words?' The clerk made answer meet,
'He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree.'
Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully,
''Tis well that such seditious words are sung
Only by priests and in the Latin tongue;
For unto priests and people be it known,
There is no power can push me from my throne!'
And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,
Lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.

When he awoke, it was already night;
The church was empty, and there was no light,
Save where the lamps, that glimmered few and faint,
Lighted a little space before some saint.
He started from his seat and gazed around,
But saw no living thing and heard no sound.
He groped towards the door, but it was locked;
He cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked,
And uttered awful threatenings and complaints,
And imprecations upon men and saints.
The sounds re-echoed from the roof and walls
As if dead priests were laughing in their stalls.

At length the sexton, hearing from without
The tumult of the knocking and the shout,
And thinking thieves were in the house of prayer,
Came with his lantern, asking, 'Who is there?'
Half-choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,
'Open: 'tis I, the King! Art thou afraid?'

The frightened sexton, muttering, with a curse,
'This is some drunken vagabond, or worse!'
Turned the great key and flung the portal wide;
A man rushed by him at a single stride,
Haggard, half-naked, without hat or cloak,
Who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke.
But leaped into the blackness of the night,
And vanished like a spectre from his sight.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Despoiled of his magnificent attire,
Bareheaded, breathless, and besprent with mire,
With sense of wrong and outrage desperate,
Strode on and thundered at the palace gate;
Rushed through the courtyard, thrusting in his rage
To right and left each seneschal and page,
And hurried up the broad and sounding stair,
His white face ghastly in the torches' glare.
From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed;
Voices and cries he heard, but did not heed,
Until at last he reached the banquet-room,
Blazing with light, and breathing with perfume.

There on the dais sat another king,
Wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring,
King Robert's self in features, form, and height,
But all transfigured with angelic light!
It was an Angel; and his presence there
With a divine effulgence filled the air,

An exaltation, piercing the disguise,
Though none the hidden Angel recognize.

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,
The throneless monarch on the Angel gazed,
Who met his look of anger and surprise
With the divine compassion of his eyes;
Then said, 'Who are thou? and why com'st thou
here?'
To which King Robert answered, with a sneer,
'I am the King, and come to claim my own
From an impostor, who usurps my throne!'
And suddenly, at these audacious words,
Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords;
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,
'Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester, thou
Henceforth shalt wear the bells and scalloped cape,
And for thy counsellor shalt lead an ape;
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call,
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall!'

Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers,
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs;
A group of tittering pages ran before,
And as they opened wide the folding door,
His heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms,
The boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms,
And all the valted chamber roar and ring
With the mock plaudits of 'Long live the King!'

Next morning, waking with the day's first beam,
He said within himself, 'It was a dream!'
But the straw rustled as he turned his head,
There were the cap and bells beside his bed,
Around him rose the bare, discoloured walls,
Close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls,
And in the corner, a revolting shape,
Shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape.

It was no dream; the world he loved so much
Had turned to dust and ashes at his touch!

Days came and went; and now returned again
To Sicily the old Saturnian reign;
Under the Angel's governance benign
The happy island danced with corn and wine,
And deep within the mountain's burning breast
Enceladus, the giant, was at rest.
Meanwhile King Robert yielded to his fate,
Sullen and silent and disconsolate.
Dressed in the motley garb that Jesters wear,
With look bewildered and a vacant stare,
Close shaven above the ears, as monks are shorn,
By courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn,
His only friend the ape, his only food
What others left,—he still was unsubdued.
And when the Angel met him on his way,
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say,
Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,
'Art thou the King?' the passion of his woe
Burst from him in resistless overflow,
And, lifting high his forehead, he would fling
The haughty answer back, 'I am, I am the King!'

Almost three years were ended, when there came
Ambassadors of great repute and name
From Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Unto King Robert, saying that Pope Urbane
By letter summoned them forthwith to come
On Holy Thursday to his city of Rome.
The Angel with great joy received his guests,
And gave them presents of embroidered vests,
And velvet mantles with rich ermine lined,
And rings and jewels of the rarest kind.

Then he departed with them o'er the sea
Into the lovely land of Italy,
Whose loveliness was more resplendent made
By the mere passing of that cavalcade,
With plumes, and cloaks, and housings, and the stir
Of jewelled bridle and of golden spur.

And lo! among the menials, in mock state,
Upon a piebald steed, with shambling gait,
His cloak of fox-tails flapping in the wind,
The solemn ape demurely perched behind,
King Robert rode, making huge merriment
In all the country towns through which they went.

The Pope received them with great pomp and blare
Of bannered trumpets, on Saint Peter's square,
Giving his benediction and embrace,
Fervent, and full of apostolic grace.
While with congratulations and with prayers
He entertained the Angel unawares,
Robert, the Jester, bursting through the crowd,
Into their presence rushed, and cried aloud,
'I am the King! Look, and behold in me
Robert, your brother, King of Sicily!
This man, who wears my semblance to your eyes,
Is an impostor in a king's disguise.
Do you not know me? does no voice within
Answer my cry, and say we are akin?'
The Pope in silence, but with troubled mien,
Gazed at the Angel's countenance serene;
The Emperor, laughing, said, 'It is strange sport
To keep a madman for thy Fool at court!'
And the poor, baffled Jester in disgrace
Was hustled back among the populace.

In solemn state the Holy Week went by,
And Easter Sunday gleamed upon the sky; 170
The presence of the Angel, with its light,
Before the sun rose, made the city bright,
And with new fervour filled the hearts of men,
Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.
Even the Jester, on his bed of straw,
With haggard eyes the unwonted splendour saw;
He felt within a power unfelt before,
And, kneeling humbly on his chamber floor,
He heard the rushing garments of the Lord
Sweep through the silent air, ascending heavenward.
And now the visit ending, and once more 181
Valmond returning to the Danube's shore,
Homeward the Angel journeyed, and again
The land was made resplendent with his train,
Flashing along the towns of Italy
Unto Salerno, and from thence by sea.
And when once more within Palermo's wall,
And, seated on the throne in his great hall,
He heard the Angelus from convent towers,
As if the better world conversed with ours, 190
He beckoned to King Robert to draw nigher,
And with a gesture bade the rest retire;
And when they were alone, the Angel said,
'Art thou the King?' Then, bowing down his head,
King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast,
And meekly answered him: 'Thou knowest best!
My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence,
And in some cloister's school of penitence,
Across these stones, that pave the way to heaven,
Walk barefoot, till my guilty soul be shriven!' 200

The Angel smiled, and from his radiant face
A holy light illumined all the place,

And through the open window, loud and clear,
They heard the monks chant in the chapel near,
Above the stir and tumult of the street:
'He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree!'
And through the chant a second melody
Rose like the throbbing of a single string:
'I am an Angel, and thou art the King!' 210

King Robert, who was standing near the throne,
Lifted his eyes, and lo! he was alone!
But all apparelled as in days of old,
With ermined mantle and with cloth of gold;
And when his courtiers came, they found him there
Kneeling upon the floor, absorbed in silent prayer.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Lincoln

Like a gaunt, scraggly pine
Which lifts its head above the mournful sandhills;
And patiently, through dull years of bitter silence,
Untended and uncared for, starts to grow.

Ungainly, labouring huge,
The wind of the north has twisted and gnarled its branches;
Yet in the heat of midsummer days, when thunder clouds ring the horizon,
A nation of men shall rest beneath its shade.

And it shall protect them all,
Hold everyone safe there, watching aloof in silence;
Until at last one mad stray bolt from the zenith
Shall strike it in an instant down to earth.

John Gould Fletcher.

O Captain! My Captain!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

Walt Whitman.

Mr. Flood's Party

OLD Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
Over the hill between the town below
And the forsaken upland hermitage
That held as much as he should ever know
On earth again of home, paused warily.
The road was his with not a native near;
And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
For no one else in Tilbury Town to hear:

'Well, Mr. Flood, we have the harvest moon
Again, and we may not have many more;
The bird is on the wing, the poet says,
And you and I have said it here before.
Drink to the bird.' He raised up to the light
The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
And answered huskily: 'Well, Mr. Flood,
Since you propose it, I believe I will.'

Alone, as if enduring to the end
A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
He stood there in the middle of the road
Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn.
Below him, in the town among the trees,
Where friends of other days had honored him,
A phantom salutation of the dead
Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim.

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child
Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
He set the jug down slowly at his feet
With trembling care, knowing that most things break;
And only when assured that on firm earth
It stood, as the uncertain lives of men
Assuredly did not, he paced away,
And with his hand extended paused again:

'Well, Mr. Flood, we have not met like this
In a long time; and many a change has come
To both of us, I fear, since last it was
We had a drop together. Welcome home!'
Convivially returning with himself,
Again he raised the jug up to the light;
And with an acquiescent quaver said:
'Well, Mr. Flood, if you insist, I might.

'Only a very little, Mr. Flood—
For auld lang syne. No more, sir; that will do.'
So, for the time, apparently it did,
And Eben evidently thought so too;
For soon amid the silver loneliness
Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
Secure, with only two moons listening,
Until the whole harmonious landscape rang—

'For auld lang syne.' The weary throat gave out,
The last word wavered, and the song being done,
He raised again the jug regretfully
And shook his head, and was again alone.
There was not much that was ahead of him,
And there was nothing in the town below—
Where strangers would have shut the many doors
That many friends had opened long ago.

Edwin Arlington Robinson.

The Patriot

AN OLD STORY

I

It was roses, roses, all the way,
  With myrtle mixed in my path like mad.
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
  The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day!

II

The air broke into a mist with bells,
  The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, 'Good folk, mere noise repels—
  But give me your sun from yonder skies!'
They had answered, 'And afterward, what else?'

III

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun,
  To give it my loving friends to keep.
Nought man could do, have I left undone;
  And you see my harvest, what I reap
This very day, now a year is run.

IV

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
  Just a palsied few at the windows set—
For the best of the sight is, all allow,
  At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
By the very scaffold's foot, I trow.

V

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
  A rope cuts both my wrists behind,
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
  For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

VI

Thus I entered and thus I go!
  In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
'Paid by the World,—what dost thou owe
  Me?'—God might question; but now instead
'Tis God shall repay! I am safer so.

Robert Browning.

The Italian in England

THAT second time they hunted me
From hill to plain, from shore to sea,
And Austria, hounding far and wide
Her blood-hounds thro' the country-side,
Breathed hot and instant on my trace,—
I made six days a hiding-place
Of that dry green old aqueduct
Where I and Charles, when boys, have plucked
The fire-flies from the roof above,
Bright creeping thro' the moss they love.
—How long it seems since Charles was lost!
Six days the soldiers crossed and crossed
The country in my very sight;
And when that peril ceased at night,
The sky broke out in red dismay
With signal-fires; well, there I lay
Close covered o'er in my recess,
Up to the neck in ferns and cress.
Thinking on Metternich our friend,
And Charles's miserable end,
And much beside, two days; the third,
Hunger o'ercame me when I heard
The peasants from the village go
To work among the maize; you know,
With us, in Lombardy, they bring
Provisions packed on mules, a string
With little bells that cheer their task,
And casks, and boughs on every cask
To keep the sun's heat from the wine;
These I let pass in jingling line,
And, close on them, dear noisy crew,
The peasants from the village, too;
For at the very rear would troop
Their wives and sisters in a group

To help, I knew; when these had passed,
I threw my glove to strike the last,
Taking the chance: she did not start,
Much less cry out, but stooped apart
One instant, rapidly glanced round,
And saw me beckon from the ground:
A wild bush grows and hides my crypt;
She picked my glove up while she stripped
A branch off, then rejoined the rest
With that; my glove lay in her breast:
Then I drew breath; they disappeared:
I was for Italy I feared.

An hour, and she returned alone
Exactly where my glove was thrown.
Meanwhile came many thoughts; on me
Rested the hopes of Italy;
I had devised a certain tale
Which, when 'twas told her, could not fail
Persuade a peasant of its truth;
I meant to call a freak of youth
This hiding, and give hopes of pay,
And no temptation to betray.
But when I saw that woman's face,
Its calm simplicity of grace,
Our Italy's own attitude
In which she walked thus far, and stood,
Planting each naked foot so firm,
To crush the snake and spare the worm—
At first sight of her eyes, I said,
'I am that man upon whose head
They fix the price, because I hate
The Austrians over us: the State
Will give you gold—oh, gold so much—
If you betray me to their clutch,
And be your death, for aught I know,
If once they find you saved their foe.

Now, you must bring me food and drink,
And also paper, pen, and ink,
And carry safe what I shall write
To Padua, which you'll reach at night
Before the Duomo shuts; go in,
And wait till Tenebrae begin;
Walk to the third confessional,
Between the pillar and the wall,
And kneeling whisper, *Whence comes peace?*
Say it a second time; then cease;
And if the voice inside returns,
From Christ and Freedom; what concerns
The cause of Peace?—for answer slip
My letter where you placed your lip;
Then come back happy we have done
Our mother service—I, the son,
As you the daughter of our land!'

Three mornings more, she took her stand
In the same place, with the same eyes:
I was no surer of sun-rise
Than of her coming. We conferred
Of her own prospects, and I heard
She had a lover—stout and tall,
She said—then let her eyelids fall,
'He could do much'—as if some doubt
Entered her heart,—then, passing out,
'She could not speak for others—who
Had other thoughts; herself she knew':
And so she brought me drink and food.
After four days, the scouts pursued
Another path; at last arrived
The help my Paduan friends contrived
To furnish me: she brought the news.
For the first time I could not choose
But kiss her hand and lay my own
Upon her head—'This faith was shown

To Italy, our mother; she
Uses my hand and blesses thee!'
She followed down to the sea-shore;
I left and never saw her more.

How very long since I have thought
Concerning—much less wished for—aught
Beside the good of Italy
For which I live and mean to die!
I never was in love; and since
Charles proved false, what shall now convince
My inmost heart I have a friend?
However, if I pleased to spend
Real wishes on myself—say, three—
I know at least what one should be.
I would grasp Metternich until
I felt his red wet throat distil
In blood thro' these two hands. And next,
—Nor much for that am I perplexed—
Charles, perjured traitor, for his part,
Should die slow of a broken heart
Under his new employers. Last
—Ah, there, what should I wish? For fast
Do I grow old and out of strength.—
If I resolved to seek at length
My father's house again, how scared
They all would look, and unprepared!
My brothers live in Austria's pay
—Disowned me long ago, men say;
And all my early mates who used
To praise me so—perhaps induced
More than one early step of mine—
Are turning wise; while some opine
'Freedom grows licence,' some suspect
'Haste breeds delay,' and recollect
They always said, such premature
Beginnings never could endure!

So, with a sullen 'All's for best,'
The land seems settling to its rest.
I think, then, I should wish to stand
This evening in that dear, lost land,
Over the sea the thousand miles,
And know if yet that woman smiles
With the calm smile; some little farm
She lives in there, no doubt; what harm
If I sat on the door-side bench,
And, while her spindle made a trench
Fantastically in the dust,
Inquired of all her fortunes—just
Her children's ages and their names,
And what may be the husband's aims
For each of them. I'd talk this out,
And sit there, for an hour about,
Then kiss her hand once more, and lay
Mine on her head, and go my way.

So much for idle wishing—how
It steals the time! To business now!

Robert Browning.

The Glove and the Lions

King Francis was a hearty king, and lov'd a royal sport,
And one day, as his lions strove, sat looking on the court;
The nobles fill'd the benches, and the ladies in their pride,
And 'mongst them sat the Count de Lorge, with one for whom he sigh'd:
And truly 'twas a gallant thing to see that crowning show,
Valour and love, and a king above, and the royal beasts below.

Ramp'd and roar'd the lions, with horrid laughing jaws;
They bit, they glared, gave blows like beams, a wind went with their paws;
With wallowing might and stifled roar they roll'd on one another,
Till all the pit with sand and mane was in a thunderous smother;
The bloody foam above the bars came whisking through the air;
Said Francis then, 'Faith, gentlemen, we're better here than there.'

De Lorge's love o'erheard the King, a beauteous lively dame
With smiling lips and sharp bright eyes, which always seem'd the same;
She thought, The Count my lover is brave as brave can be;
He surely would do wondrous things to show his love of me;
King, ladies, lovers, all look on; the occasion is divine;
I'll drop my glove to prove his love; great glory will be mine.

She dropp'd her glove to prove his love, then look'd at him and smiled;
He bow'd, and in a moment leap'd among the lions wild;
The leap was quick, return was quick, he soon regain'd his place,
Then threw the glove, but not with love, right in the lady's face.
'By God!' said Francis, 'rightly done!' and he rose from where he sat;
'No love,' quoth he, 'but vanity, sets love a task like that.'

Leigh Hunt.

The Glove

(PETER RONSARD *loquitur*)

'Heigho,' yawned one day King Francis,
'Distance all value enhances!
When a man's busy, why, leisure
Strikes him as wonderful pleasure,—
'Faith, and at leisure once is he?
Straightway he wants to be busy.
Here we've got peace; and aghast I'm
Caught thinking war the true pastime!
Is there a reason in metre?
Give us your speech, master Peter!'
I who, if mortal dare say so,
Ne'er am at loss with my Naso,
'Sire,' I replied, 'joys prove cloudlets:
Men are the merest Ixions'—
Here the King whistled aloud, 'Let's
'. . . Heigho . . . go look at our lions!'
Such are the sorrowful chances
If you talk fine to King Francis.

And so, to the courtyard proceeding,
Our company, Francis was leading,
Increased by new followers tenfold
Before he arrived at the penfold;
Lords, ladies, like clouds which bedizen
At sunset the western horizon.
And Sir De Lorge pressed 'mid the foremost
With the dame he professed to adore most.
Oh, what a face! One by fits eyed
Her, and the horrible pitside;
For the penfold surrounded a hollow
Which led where the eye scarce dared follow,
And shelved to the chamber secluded
Where Bluebeard, the great lion, brooded.
The king hailed his keeper, an Arab
As glossy and black as a scarab,

And bade him make sport and at once stir
Up and out of his den the old monster.
They opened a hole in the widework
Across it, and dropped there a firework,
And fled; one's heart's beating redoubled;
A pause, while the pit's mouth was troubled,
The blackness and silence so utter,
By the firework's slow sparkling and sputter;
Then earth in a sudden contortion
Gave out to our gaze her abortion!
Such a brute! Were I friend Clement Marot
(Whose experience of nature's but narrow,
And whose faculties move in no small mist
When he versifies David the Psalmist)
I should study that brute to describe you
Illum Juda Leonem de Tribu!
One's whole blood grew curdling and creepy
To see the black mane, vast and heapy,
The tail in the air stiff and straining,
The wide eyes, nor waxing nor waning,
As over the barrier which bounded
His platform, and us who surrounded
The barrier, they reached and they rested
On the space that might stand him in best stead;
For who knew, he thought, what the amazement,
The eruption of clatter and blaze meant,
And if, in this minute of wonder,
No outlet, 'mid lightning and thunder
Lay broad, and, his shackles all shivered,
The lion at last was delivered?
Ay, that was the open sky o'erhead!
And you saw by the flash on his forehead,
By the hope in those eyes wide and steady,
He was leagues in the desert already,
Driving the flocks up the mountain,
Or catlike couched hard by the fountain

To waylay the date-gathering negress:
So guarded he entrance or egress.
'How he stands!' quoth the King: 'we may well swear,
(No novice, we've won our spurs elsewhere,
And so can afford the confession)
We exercise wholesome discretion
In keeping aloof from his threshold;
Once hold you, those jaws want no fresh hold,
Their first would too pleasantly purloin
The visitor's brisket or sirloin;
But who's he would prove so fool-hardy?
Not the best man of Marignan, pardie?'

The sentence no sooner was uttered,
Then over the rails a glove fluttered,
Fell close to the lion, and rested:
The dame 'twas, who flung it and jested
With life so, De Lorge had been wooing
For months past; he sat there pursuing
His suit, weighing out with nonchalance
Fine speeches like gold from a balance.

Sound the trumpet, no true knight's a tarrier!
De Lorge made one leap at the barrier,
Walked straight to the glove,—while the lion
Ne'er moved, kept his far-reaching eye on
The palm-tree-edged desert-spring's sapphire,
And the musky oiled skin of the Kaffir,—
Picked it up, and as calmly retreated,
Leaped back where the lady was seated,
And full in the face of its owner
Flung the glove—

'Your heart's queen, you dethrone her?
So should I'—cried the King—' 'twas mere vanity,
Not love, set that task to humanity!'

Lords and ladies alike turned with loathing
From such a proved wolf in sheep's clothing.
Not so, I; for I caught an expression
In her brow's undisturbed self-possession
Amid the Court's scoffing and merriment,—
As if from no pleasing experiment
She rose, yet of pain not much heedful
So long as the process was needful—
As if she had tried in a crucible,
To what 'speeches like gold' were reducible,
And, finding the finest prove copper,
Felt the smoke in her face was but proper;
To know what she had *not* to trust to,
Was worth all the ashes, and dust too.
She went out 'mid hooting and laughter;
Clement Marot stayed; I followed after,
And asked, as a grace, what it all meant—
If she wished not the rash deed's recalment?
'For I'—so I spoke—'am a poet:
Human nature,—behoves that I know it!'

She told me, 'Too long had I heard
Of the deed proved alone by the word:
For my love—what De Lorge would not dare!
With my scorn—what De Lorge could compare!
And the endless descriptions of death
He would brave when my lip formed a breath,
I must reckon as braved, or, of course,
Doubt his word—and moreover, perforce,
For such gifts as no lady could spurn,
Must offer my love in return.
When I looked on your lion, it brought
All the dangers at once to my thought,
Encountered by all sorts of men,
Before he was lodged in his den,—

From the poor slave whose club or bare hands
Dug the trap, set the snare on the sands,
With no King and no Court to applaud,
By no shame, should he shrink, overawed,
Yet to capture the creature made shift,
That his rude boys might laugh at the gift,
To the page who last leaped o'er the fence
Of the pit, on no greater pretence
Than to get back the bonnet he dropped,
Lest his pay for a week should be stopped—
So, wiser I judged it to make
One trial what "death for my sake"
Really meant, while the power was yet mine,
Than to wait until time should define
Such a phrase not so simply as I,
Who took it to mean just "to die."
The blow a glove gives is but weak—
Does the mark yet discolour my cheek?
But when the heart suffers a blow,
Will the pain pass so soon, do you know?'

I looked, as away she was sweeping,
And saw a youth eagerly keeping
As close as he dared to the doorway:
No doubt that a noble should more weigh
His life than befits a plebeian;
And yet, had our brute been Nemean—
(I judge by a certain calm fervour
The youth stepped with, forward to serve her)
—He's have scarce thought you did him the worst turn
If you whispered 'Friend, what you'd get, first earn!
And when, shortly after, she carried
Her shame from the Court, and they married,
To that marriage some happiness, maugre
The voice of the Court, I dared augur.

Robert Browning.

Part Two

Edward

'Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
Edward, Edward?
Why does your brand sae drop wi' blude,
And why sae sad gang ye, O?'
'O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
Mither, mither:
O I hae killed my hawk sae gude,
And I had nae mair but he, O.'

'Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
Edward, Edward.
Your hawk's blude was never sae red,
My dear son, I tell thee, O.'
'O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
Mither, mither:
O I hae killed my red-roan steed,
That erst was sae fair and free, O.'

'Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair,
Edward, Edward:
Your steed was auld, and ye hae got mair,
Some other dule ye dree, O.'
'O I hae killed my father dear,
Mither, mither:
O I hae killed my father dear,
Alas! and wae is me, O.'

'And whatten penance will ye dree for that,
Edward, Edward?
And whatten penance will ye dree for that?
My dear son, now tell me, O.'

'I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
Mither, mither:
I'll set my feet in yonder boat,
And I'll fare over the sea, O.'

'And what will ye do wi' your towers and your ha',
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye do wi' your towers and your ha'
That were sae fair to see, O?'
'I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
Mither, mither:
I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
For here never mair maun I be, O.'

'And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your bairns and your wife,
When ye gang over the sea, O?'
'The warld's room, let them beg through life
Mither, mither:
The warld's room, let them beg through life,
For them never mair will I see, O.'

'And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear,
Edward, Edward?
And what will ye leave to your ain mither dear?
My dear son, now tell me, O,'
'The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Mither, mither:
The curse of hell frae me sall ye bear,
Sic counsels ye gave to me, O.'

Anonymous.

The Twa Sisters o' Binnorie

There were twa sisters sat in a bow'r;
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
A knight cam' there, a noble wooer,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove and ring,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
But he lo'ed the youngest aboon a' thing,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The eldest she was vexèd sair,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And sair envied her sister fair,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Upon a morning fair and clear,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
She cried upon her sister dear,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, sister, tak' my hand,'
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And let's go down to the river-strand,'
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

She's ta'en her by the lily hand,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And down they went to the river-strand
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The youngest stood upon a stane,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
The eldest cam' and pushed her in,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, sister, reach your hand!'
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And ye shall be heir o' half my land'—
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O sister, reach me but your glove!'
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'And sweet William sall be your love'—
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
Till she cam' to the mouth o' yon mill-dam,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Out then cam' the miller's son
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And saw the fair maid swimmin' in,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

'O father, father, draw your dam!'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'There's either a mermaid or a swan,'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

The miller quickly drew the dam,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And there he found a drown'd womàn,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Round about her middle sma'
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
There went a gouden girdle bra'
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

All amang her yellow hair
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
A string o' pearls was twisted rare,
By the bonnie mill-dams o' Binnorie.

On her fingers lily-white,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
The jewel-rings were shining bright,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And by there cam' a harper fine,
(Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
Harpèd to nobles when they dine,
By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And when he looked that lady on,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
He sigh'd and made a heavy moan,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He's ta'en three locks o' her yellow hair,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And wi' them strung his harp sae rare,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

He went into her father's hall,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
And played his harp before them all,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And sune the harp sang loud and clear,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'Fareweel, my father and mither dear!'
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And neist when the harp began to sing,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'Twas 'Fareweel, sweetheart!' said the string,
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

And then as plain as plain could be,
  (Binnorie, O Binnorie!)
'There sits my sister who drownèd me!'
  By the bonny mill-dams o' Binnorie.

Anonymous.

John of Tours

(OLD FRENCH)

John of Tours is back with peace,
But he comes home ill at ease.

'Good-morrow, mother.' 'Good-morrow, son;
Your wife has borne you a little one.'

'Go now, mother, go before,
Make me a bed upon the floor;

'Very low your foot must fall,
That my wife hear not at all.'

As it neared the midnight toll
John of Tours gave up his soul.

'Tell me now, my mother my dear,
What's the crying that I hear?'

'Daughter, it's the children wake
Crying with their teeth that ache.'

'Tell me though, my mother my dear,
What's the knocking that I hear?'

'Daughter, it's the carpenter
Mending planks upon the stair.'

'Tell me, too, my mother my dear,
What's the singing that I hear?'

'Daughter, it's the priests in rows
Going round about our house.'

'Tell me then, my mother my dear,
What's the dress that I should wear?'

'Daughter, any reds or blues,
But the black is most in use.'

'Nay, but say, my mother my dear,
Why do you fall weeping here?'

'Oh! the truth must be said,—
It's that John of Tours is dead.'

'Mother, let the sexton know
That the grave must be for two;

'Aye, and still have room to spare,
For you must shut the baby there.'

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Robin Hood

TO A FRIEND

No! those days are gone away,
And their hours are old and grey,
And their minutes buried all
Under the down-trodden pall
Of the leaves of many years:
Many times have winter's shears,
Frozen North, and chilling East,
Sounded tempests to the feast
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,
And the twanging bow no more;
Silent is the ivory shrill
Past the heath and up the hill;
There is no mid-forest laugh,
Where lone Echo gives the half
To some wight, amaz'd to hear
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
You may go, with sun or moon,
Or the seven stars to light you,
Or the polar ray to right you;
But you never may behold
Little John, or Robin bold;

Never one, of all the clan,
Thrumming on an empty can
Some old hunting ditty, while
He doth his green way beguile
To fair hostess Merriment,
Down beside the pasture Trent;
For he left the merry tale
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
Gone, the song of Gamelyn;
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
Idling in the 'grenè shawe';
All are gone away and past!
And if Robin should be cast
Sudden from his turfèd grave,
And if Marian should have
Once again her forest days,
She would weep, and he would craze:
He would swear, for all his oaks,
Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,
Have rotted on the briny seas;
She would weep that her wild bees
Sang not to her—strange! that honey
Can't be got without hard money!

So it is; yet let us sing,
Honour to the old bow-string!
Honour to the bugle-horn!
Honour to the woods unshorn!
Honour to the Lincoln green!
Honour to the archer keen!
Honour to tight Little John,
And the horse he rode upon!
Honour to bold Robin Hood,
Sleeping in the underwood!

Honour to maid Marian,
And to all the Sherwood-clan! 60
Though their days have hurried by
Let us two a burden try.

John Keats.

Sherwood

SHERWOOD in the twilight, is Robin Hood awake?
Grey and ghostly shadows are gliding through the brake,
Shadows of the dappled deer, dreaming of the morn,
Dreaming of a shadowy man that winds a shadowy horn.

Robin Hood is here again: all his merry thieves
Hear a ghostly bugle-note shivering through the leaves,
Calling as he used to call, faint and far away,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Merry, merry England has kissed the lips of June:
All the wings of fairyland were here beneath the moon,
Like a flight of rose-leaves fluttering in a mist 11
Of opal and ruby and pearl and amethyst.

Oaken-hearted England is waking as of old,
With eyes of blither hazel and hair of brighter gold:
For Robin Hood is here again beneath the bursting spray
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Love is in the greenwood building him a house
Of wild rose and hawthorn and honeysuckle boughs:
Love is in the greenwood, dawn is in the skies,
And Marian is waiting with a glory in her eyes. 20

Hark! The dazzled laverock climbs the golden steep!
Marian is waiting: is Robin Hood asleep?
Round the fairy grass-rings, frolic elf and fay,
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Oberon, Oberon, rake away the gold,
Rake away the red leaves, roll away the mould,
Rake away the gold leaves, roll away the red,
And wake Will Scarlett from his leafy forest bed.

Friar Tuck and Little John are riding down together
With quarter-staff and drinking can and grey goose feather.
The dead are coming back again, the years are rolled away
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Softly over Sherwood the south wind blows,
All the heart of England hid in every rose
Hears across the greenwood the sunny whisper leap,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Hark, the voice of England wakes him as of old,
And, shattering the silence with a cry of brighter gold,
Bugles in the greenwood echo from the steep,
Sherwood in the red dawn, is Robin Hood asleep?

Where the deer are gliding down the shadowy glen,
All across the glades of fern he calls his merry men—
Doublets of the Lincoln green glancing through the may
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day—

Calls them and they answer: from aisles of oak and ash
Rings the *Follow! Follow!* and the boughs begin to crash,

The ferns begin to flutter and the flowers begin to fly,
And through the crimson dawning the robber band
goes by.

Robin! Robin Robin All his merry thieves
Answer as the bugle-note shivers through the leaves,
Calling as he used to fall, faint and far away.
In Sherwood, in Sherwood, about the break of day.

Alfred Noyes.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

Part I

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child;
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old sea-faring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—'
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship driven by a storm toward the south pole.

'And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:

And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the fog it came:
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.'

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?'—'With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.'

Part II

'The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariner's hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line. The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so,
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the Cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

'There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!

The Ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could not laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

A flash of joy;

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call;
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame,
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those *her* ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that Woman's mate?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun.

The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

Her lips were red, *her* looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

Like vessel, like crew!

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
"The game is done! I've won! I've won!"
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

At the rising of the Moon.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;

From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The hornèd Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

One after another,

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

His shipmates drop down dead.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!'

Part IV

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is talking to him;

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—
'Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropt not down.'

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm,

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

And envieth that *they* should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward, and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,

He blesseth them in his heart.

And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

Part V

'Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;

Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs;
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessèd ghost.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

And soon I heard a roaring wind;
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did not roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsmen steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me.'

But not by the souls of the men, nor by daemons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'
'Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,

A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan to stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-daemons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

"Is it he?" quoth one, "Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow."

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, "The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do."

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

'"But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?"

SECOND VOICE

"Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him."

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

FIRST VOICE

"But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without a wave or wind?"

SECOND VOICE

"The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated."

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high,
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

And appear in their own forms of light.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand;
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Hermit of the Wood,

'This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!

He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
"Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?"

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

"Strange, by my faith!" the Hermit said—
"And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young."

"Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared"—"Push on, push on!"
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:

It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
"Ha! ha!" quoth he, "full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row."

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

"O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!"
The Hermit crossed his brow.
"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?"

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,

Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land;

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea;
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.'

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Heather Ale

A GALLOWAY LEGEND

From the bonny bells of heather
  They brewed a drink long-syne,
Was sweeter far than honey,
  Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
  And lay in a blessed swound
For days and days together
  In their dwellings underground.

There rose a king in Scotland,
  A fell man to his foes,
He smote the Picts in battle,
  He hunted them like roes.

Over miles of the red mountain
He hunted as they fled,
And strewed the dwarfish bodies
Of the dying and the dead.

Summer came in the country,
Red was the heather bell;
But the manner of the brewing
Was none alive to tell.
In graves that were like children's
On many a mountain head,
The Brewsters of the Heather
Lay numbered with the dead.

The king in the red moorland
Rode on a summer's day;
And the bees hummed, and the curlews
Cried beside the way.
The king rode, and was angry,
Black was his brow and pale,
To rule in a land of heather
And lack the Heather Ale.

It fortuned that his vassals,
Riding free on the heath,
Came on a stone that was fallen
And vermin hid beneath.
Rudely plucked from their hiding,
Never a word they spoke:
A son and his agèd father—
Last of the dwarfish folk.

The king sat high on his charger,
He looked on the little men;
And the dwarfish and swarthy couple
Looked at the king again.

Down by the shore he had them;
  And there on the giddy brink—
'I will give you life, ye vermin,
  For the secret of the drink.'

There stood the son and father
  And they looked high and low;
The heather was red around them
  The sea rumbled below.
And up and spoke the father,
  Shrill was his voice to hear:
'I have a word in private,
  A word for the royal ear.

'Life is dear to the agèd,
  And honour a little thing;
I would gladly sell the secret,'
  Quoth the Pict to the King.
His voice was small as a sparrow's,
  And shrill and wonderful clear:
'I would gladly sell my secret,
  Only my son I fear.

'For life is a little matter,
  And death is nought to the young;
And I dare not sell my honour
  Under the eye of my son.
Take *him*, O king, and bind him,
  And cast him far in the deep;
And it's I will tell the secret
  That I have sworn to keep.'

They took the son and bound him,
  Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
  And flung him far and strong,

And the sea swallowed his body,
  Like that of a child of ten;—
And there on the cliff stood the father,
  Last of the dwarfish men.

'True was the word I told you:
  Only my son I feared;
For I doubt the sapling courage
  That goes without the beard.
But now in vain is the torture,
  Fire shall never avail:
Here dies in my bosom
  The secret of Heather Ale.'

R. L. Stevenson.

Border March

I

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
  Why the deil dinna ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
  All the Blue Bonnets are bound for the Border.
        Many a banner spread,
        Flutters above your head,
    Many a crest that is famous in story.
        Mount and make ready then,
        Sons of the mountain glen,
    Fight for the Queen of our old Scottish glory.

II

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
  Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
  Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
        Trumpets are sounding,
        War-steeds are bounding,

Stand to your arms and march in good order,
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray, 19
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.

Sir Walter Scott.

Roundabouts and Swings

It was early last September nigh to Framlin'am-on-Sea,
An' 'twas Fair-day come to-morrow, an' the time was after tea,
An' I met a painted caravan adown a dusty lane,
A Pharaoh with his waggons comin' jolt an' creak an' strain;
A cheery cove an' sunburst, bold o' eye and wrinkled up,
An' beside him on the splashboard sat a brindled terrier pup,
An' a lurcher wise as Solomon an' lean as fiddle-strings
Was joggin' in the dust along 'is roundabouts and swings.

'Goo'-day,' said 'e; 'Goo'-day,' said I; 'an' 'ow d' you find things go,
An' what's the chance o' millions when you runs a travellin' show?' 10
'I find,' said 'e, 'things very much as 'ow I've always found,
For mostly they goes up and down or else goes round and round.'
Said 'e, 'The job's the very spit o' what it always were,
It's bread and bacon mostly when the dog don't catch a 'are;

But lookin' at it broad, an' while it ain't no merchant king's,
What's lost upon the roundabouts we pulls up on the swings!

'Goo' luck,' said 'e; 'Goo 'luck,' said I; 'you've put it past a doubt;
An' keep that lurcher on the road, the gamekeepers is out.'
'E thumped upon the footboard an' 'e lumbered on again
To meet a gold-dust sunset down the owl-light in the lane;
An' the moon she climbed the 'azels, while a night-jar seemed to spin
That Pharaoh's wisdom o'er again, 'is sooth of lose-and-win;
For 'up an' down an' round,' said 'e, 'goes all appointed things,
An' losses on the roundabouts means profits on the swings!'

Patrick R. Chalmers.

The Pilot of the Plains

'FALSE,' they said, 'thy Pale-face lover, from the land of waking morn;
Rise and wed thy Redskin wooer, nobler warrior ne'er was born;
Cease thy watching, cease thy dreaming,
Show the white thine Indian scorn.'

Thus they taunted her, declaring, 'He remembers naught of thee:
Likely some white maid he wooeth, far beyond the inland sea.'

But she answered ever kindly,
'He will come again to me,'

Till the dusk of Indian summer crept athwart the western skies;
But a deeper dusk was burning in her dark and dreaming eyes,
As she scanned the rolling prairie,
Where the foothills fall and rise.

Till the autumn came and vanished, till the season of the rains,
Till the western world lay fettered in midwinter's crystal chains,
Still she listened for his coming,
Still she watched the distant plains.

Then a night with nor'land tempest, nor'land snows a-swirling fast,
Out upon the pathless prairie came the Pale-face through the blast,
Calling, calling, 'Yakonwita,
I am coming, love, at last.'

Hovered night above, about him, dark its wings and cold and dread;
Never unto trail or tepee were his straying footsteps led;
Till benumbed, he sank, and pillowed
On the drifting snows his head,

Saying, 'O my Yakonwita, call me, call me, be my guide
To the lodge beyond the prairie—for I vowed ere winter died
I would come again, belovèd;
I would claim my Indian bride!'

'Yakonwita, Yakonwita,' O the dreariness that strains
Through the voice that calling, quivers, till a whisper but remains!
'Yakonwita, Yakonwita,
I am lost upon the plains!'

But the Silent Spirit hushed him, lulled him as he cried anew,
'Save me, save me, O beloved, I am Pale, but I am true!
Yakonwita, Yakonwita,
I am dying, love, for you!'

Leagues afar, across the prairie, she had risen from her bed,
Roused her kinsmen from their slumber: 'He has come to-night,' she said.
'I can hear him calling, calling,
But his voice is as the dead.

'Listen!' and they sate all silent, while the tempest louder grew,
And a spirit-voice called faintly, 'I am dying, love, for you.'
Then they wailed, 'O Yakonwita,
He was Pale, but he was true!'

Wrapped she then her ermine round her, stepped without the tepee door,
Saying, 'I must follow, follow, though he call for evermore,
Yakonwita, Yakonwita,'
And they never saw her more.

Late at night, say Indian hunters, when the starlight clouds or wanes,

Far away they see a maiden, misty as the autumn rains,
Guiding with her lamp of moonlight
Hunters lost upon the plains.

Pauline Johnson.

Black Bill's Honey-moon

(ABRIDGED)

CANTO THE FIRST

All in the gorgeous dawn of day
From grey old Plymouth Sound
Our galleon crashed thro' the crimson spray
To sail the world around:
Cloud i' the Sun was her white-scrolled name,—
There was never a lovelier lass
For sailing in state after pieces of eight
With her bombards all of brass.

Chorus: Culverins, robinets, iron may-be;
But her bombards all of brass!

Now, they that go down to the sea in ships,
Though piracy be their trade,
For all that they pray not much with their lips
They know where the storms are made:
With the stars above and the sharks below,
They need not parson or clerk;
But our bo'sun Bill was an atheist still,
Except—sometimes—in the dark!

Chorus: Now let Kit Marlowe mark!
Our bo'sun Bill was an atheist still,
Except—sometimes—in the dark!

All we adventured for, who shall say,
Nor yet what our port might be?—

A magical city of old Cathay,
  Or a castle of Muscovy,
With our atheist bo'sun, Bill, Black Bill,
  Under the swinging Bear,
Whistling at night for a seaman to light
  His little poop-lanthorns there.

Chorus: On the deep, in the night, for a seaman to light;
    His little lost lanthorns there.

But, as over the Ocean-sea we swept,
  We chanced on a strange new land
Where a valley of tall white lilies slept
  With a forest on either hand;
A valley of white in a purple wood
  And, behind it, faint and far,
Breathless and bright o'er the last rich height,
  Floated the sunset-star.

Chorus: Fair and bright o'er the rose-red height
    Venus, the sunset-star.

'Twas a marvel to see, as we beached our boat,
  Black Bill, in that peach-bloom air,
With the great white lilies that reached to his throat
  Like a stained-glass bo'sun there,
And our little ship's chaplain, puffing and red,
  A-starn as we onward stole,
With the disk of a lily behind his head
  Like a cherubin's aureole.

Chorus: He was round and red and behind his head
    He'd a cherubin's aureole.

'Hyrcania, land of honey and bees,
  We have found thee at last,' he said,
'Where the honey-comb swells in the hollow trees,'

(O, the lily behind his head!)
'The honey-comb swells in the purple wood!
'Tis the swette which the heavens distil,
Saith Pliny himself, on my little book-shelf!
Is the world not sweet to thee, Bill?'

Chorus: Saith Pliny himself, on my little book-shelf!
Is the world not sweet to thee, Bill? 61

Now a man may taste of the devil's hot spice,
And yet if his mind run back
To the honey of childhood's Paradise
His heart is not wholly black;
And Bill, Black Bill, from the days of his youth,
Tho' his chest was broad as an oak,
Had cherished one innocent little sweet tooth,
And it itched as our chaplain spoke.

Chorus: He had kept one perilous little sweet tooth,
And it itched as our chaplain spoke. 71

All around was a mutter of bees,
And Bill 'gan muttering too,—
'If the honey-comb swells in the hollow trees,
(What else can a Didymus do?)
I'll steer to the purple woods myself
And see if this thing be so,
Which the chaplain found on his little book-shelf,
For Pliny lived long ago.'

Chorus: There's a platter of delf on his little book-shelf,
And Pliny lived long ago. 81

Scarce had he spoken when, out of the wood,
And buffeting all around,
Rooting our sea-boots where we stood,
There rumbled a marvellous sound,

As a mountain of honey were crumbling asunder,
Or a sunset-avalanche hurled
Honey-comb boulders of golden thunder
To smother the old black world.

Chorus: Honey-comb boulders of musical thunder
To mellow this old black world.

And the chaplain he whispered—'This honey, one saith,
On my camphired cabin-shelf,
None may harvest on pain of death;
For the bee would eat it himself!
None walketh those woods but him whose voice
In the dingles you then did hear!'
'A Voice?' growls Bill! 'Ay, Bill, r-r-rejoice!
'Twas the great Hyrcanian Bear!'

Chorus: Give thanks! Re-joice! 'Twas the glor-r-r-ious Voice
Of the great Hyrcanian Bear!

But, marking that Bill looked bitter indeed,
For his sweet tooth hungered sore,
'Consider,' he saith, 'that the Sweet hath need
Of the Sour, as the Sea of the Shore!
As the night to the day is our grief to our joy,
As each for its brother prepares
A banquet, Bill, that would otherwise cloy.
Thus is it with honey and bears.'

Chorus: Roses and honey and laughter would cloy!
Give us thorns, too, and sorrow and bears!

'Consider,' he saith, 'how by fretting a string
The lutanist maketh sweet moan,
And a bird ere it fly must have air for its wing
To buffet or fall like a stone:

Tho' you blacken like Pluto you make but more white
  These blooms which not Enna could yield!
Consider, Black Bill, ere the coming of night,
  The lilies,' he saith, 'of the field.' 119

Chorus: 'Consider, Black Bill, in this beautiful light,
    The lilies,' he saith, 'of the field.'

'Consider the claws of a Bear,' said Bill,
  'That can rip off the flesh from your bones,
While his belly could cabin the skipper and still
  Accommodate Timothy Jones!
Why, that's where a seaman who cares for his grog
  Perspires how this world isn't square!
If there's *cause* for a *cow,* if there's *use* for a *dog,*
  By Pope John, there's no *Sense* in a *Bear!'*

Chorus: Cause for a cow, use for a dog, 130
    By'r Lakin, no *Sense* in a *Bear!*

But our little ship's chaplain—'Sense,' quoth he,
  'Hath the Bear tho' his making have none;
For, my little book saith, by the sting of this bee
  Would Ursus be wholly foredone,
But, or ever the hive he adventureth nigh
  And its crisp gold-crusted dome,
He lardeth his nose and he greaseth his eye
  With a piece of an honey-comb.'

Chorus: His velvety nose and his sensitive eye 140
    With a piece of an honey-comb.

Black Bill at the word of that golden crust
  —For his ears had forgotten the roar,
And his eyes grew soft with their innocent lust—
  'Gan licking his lips once more:

'Be it bound like a missal and printed as fair,
  With capitals blue and red,
'Tis a lie; for what honey could comfort a bear
  Till the bear win the honey?' he said.

Chorus: 'Ay, *whence* the first honey wherewith the first bear
  First larded his nose?' he said.

'Thou first metaphysical bo'sun, Bill,'
  Our chaplain quizzingly cried,
'Wilt thou riddle me redes of a dumpling still
  With thy "how came the apple inside"?'
'Nay,' answered Bill, 'but I quest for truth,
  And I find it not on your shelf!
I will face your Hyrcanian bear, forsooth,
  And look at his nose myself.'

Chorus: For truth, for truth, or a little sweet tooth—
  I will into the woods myself.

Breast-high thro' that foam-white ocean of bloom
  With its wonderful spokes of gold,
Our sun-burnt crew in the rose-red gloom
  Like buccaneer galleons rolled:
Breast-high, breast-high in the lilies we stood,
  And before we could say 'good-night,'
Out of the valley and into the wood
  He plunged thro' the last rich light.

Chorus: Out of the lilies and into the wood,
  Where the Great Bear walks all night!

And our little ship's chaplain he piped thro' the trees
  As the moon rose, white and still,
'Hylas, return to thy Heracles!'
  And we helped him with 'Come back, Bill!'
Thrice he piped it, thrice we halloo'd,
  And thrice we were dumb to hark;

But never an answer came from the wood,
  So—we turned to our ship in the dark.

Chorus: Good-bye, Bill! you're a Didymus still;
          But—you're all alone in the dark. 181

CANTO THE SECOND

Let us now sing of Bill, good sirs!
Follow him, all green forestéres,
Fearless of Hyrcanian bears
  As of these ghostly lilies!
For O, not Drayton there could sing
Of wild Pigwiggen and his King
So merry a jest, so jolly a thing
  As this my tale of Bill is.

Chorus: Into the woods where Bill is! 190

Now starts he as a white owl hoots,
And now he stumbles over roots,
And now beneath his big sea-boots
  In yon deep glade he crunches
Black cakes of honey-comb that were
So elfin-sweet, perchance, last year;
But neither Bo'sun, now, nor Bear
  At that dark banquet munches.

Chorus: Onward still he crunches!

Black cakes of honey-comb he sees 200
Above him in the forks of trees
Filled by stars instead of bees
  With brimming silver glisten:
But ah, such food of gnome and fay
Could neither Bear nor Bill delay
Till where yon ferns and moon-beams play
  He starts and stands to listen!

Chorus: What melody doth he listen?

Is it the Night-wind as it comes
Through the wood and softly thrums
Silvery tabors, purple drums,
To speed some wild-wood revel?
Nay, Didymus, what faint sweet din
Of viol and flute and violin
Makes all the forest round thee spin,
The Night-wind or the Devil?

Chorus: No doubt at all—the Devil!

He stares, with naked knife in hand,
This buccaneer in fairyland!
Dancing in a saraband
The red ferns reel about him!
Dancing in a morrice-ring
The green ferns curtsey, kiss and cling!
Their Marions flirt, their Robins fling
Their feathery heels to flout him!

Chorus: The whole wood reels about him.

Dance, ye shadows! O'er the glade,
Bill, the Bo'sun, undismayed,
Pigeon-toes with glittering blade!
Drake was never bolder!
Devil or Spaniard, what cares he
Whence your eerie music be?
Till—lo, against yon old oak-tree
He leans his brawny shoulder!

Chorus: He lists and leans his shoulder!

Ah, what melody doth he hear
As to that gnarled old tree-trunk there
He lays his wind-bit brass-ringed ear,
And steals his arm about it?
What Dryad could this Bo'sun win

To that slow-rippling amorous grin?—
'Twas full of singing bees within!
  Not Didymus could doubt it!

Chorus: So loud they buzzed about it!

Straight, o'er a bough one leg he throws,
And up that oaken main-mast goes
With reckless red unlarded nose
  And goose-berry eyes of wonder!
Till now, as in a galleon's hold,
Below, he sees great cells of gold
Whence all the hollow trunk up-rolled
  A low melodious thunder.

Chorus: A sweet and perilous thunder!

Ay, there, within that hollow tree,
Will Shakespeare, might'st thou truly see
The Imperial City of the Bee,
  In Chrysomelan splendour!
And, in the midst, one eight-foot dome
Swells o'er that Titan honey-comb
Where the Bee-Empress hath her home,
  With such as do attend her.

Chorus: Weaponed with stings attend her!

But now her singing sentinels
Have turned to sleep in waxen cells,
And Bill leans down his face and smells
  The whole sweet summer's cargo—
In one deep breath, the whole year's bloom,
Lily and thyme and rose and broom,
One Golden Fleece of flower-perfume
  In that old oaken Argo.

Chorus: That green and golden Argo!

And now he hangs with dangling feet
Over that dark abyss of sweet,
Striving to reach such wild gold meat
As none could buy for money:
His left hand grips a swinging branch
When—crack! Our Bo'sun, stout and stanch,
Falls like an Alpine avalanche,
Feet first into the honey!

Chorus: Up to his ears in honey!

And now his red un-larded nose
And bulging eyes are all that shows
Above it, as he puffs and blows!
And now—to 'scape the scathing
Of that black host of furious bees
His nose and eyes he fain would grease,
And bobs below those golden seas
Like an old woman bathing.

Chorus: Old Mother Hubbard bathing!

And now he struggles, all in vain,
To reach some little bough again;
But, though he heaves with might and main,
This honey holds his ribs, sirs,
So tight, a barque might sooner try
To steer a cargo through the sky
Than Bill, thus honey-logged, to fly
By flopping of his jib, sirs!

Chorus: His tops'l and his jib, sirs!

Like Oberon in the hive his beard
With wax and honey all besmeared
Would make the crescent moon afeard
That now is sailing brightly
Right o'er his leafy donjon-keep!

But that she knows him sunken deep,
And that his tower is straight and steep,
  She would not smile so lightly.

Chorus: Look down and smile so lightly.

She smiles in that small heavenly space,
Ringed with the tree-trunk's leafy grace,
While upward grins his ghastly face
  As if some wild-wood Satyr,
Some gnomish Ptolemy should dare
Up that dark optic tube to stare,
As all unveiled she floated there,
  Poor maiden moon, straight at her!

Chorus: The buccaneering Satyr!

But there, till some one help him out,
Black Bill must stay, without a doubt.
Help! Help! he gives a muffled shout!
  None but the white owls hear it!
Who? Whoo? they cried: Bill answers 'ME!
I am stuck fast in this great tree!
Bring me a rope, good Timothy!
  There's honey, lads, we'll share it!'

Chorus: Ay, now he wants to share it.

Then, thinking help may come with morn,
He sinks, half-famished and out-worn,
And scarce his nose exalts its horn
  Above that sea of glory!
But, even as he owns defeat,
His belly saith, 'A man must eat,
And since there is none other meat,
  Come, lap this mess before 'ee!'

Chorus: This glorious mess before 'ee.

Then Dian sees a right strange sight
As, bidding him a fond good-night,
She flings a silvery kiss to light
In that deep oak-tree hollow,
And finds that gold and crimson nose
A moving, munching, ravenous rose
That up and down unceasing goes,
Save when he stops to swallow!

Chorus: He finds it hard to swallow!

Ay, now his best becomes his worst,
For honey cannot quench his thirst,
Though he should eat until he burst;
But ah, the skies are kindly,
And from their tender depths of blue
They send their silver-sliding dew.
So Bill thrusts out his tongue anew
And waits to catch it—blindly!

Chorus: For ah, the stars are kindly!

And sometimes, with a shower of rain,
They strive to ease their prisoner's pain:
Then Bill thrusts out his tongue again
With never a grace, the sinner!
And day and night and day goes by,
And never a comrade comes anigh,
And still the honey swells as high
For supper, breakfast, dinner!

Chorus: Yet Bill has grown no thinner!

The young moon grows to full and throws
Her buxom kiss upon his nose,
As nightly over the tree she goes,
And peeps and smiles and passes,

Then with her fickle silver flecks
Our old black galleon's dreaming decks;
And then her face, with nods and becks,
  In midmost ocean glasses.

Chorus: 'Twas ever the way with lasses! 370

Ah, Didymus, has thou won indeed
That Paradise which is thy meed?
(Thy tale not all that run may read!)
  Thy sweet hath now no leaven!
Now, like an onion in a cup
Of mead, thou liest for Jove to sup,
Could Polyphemus lift thee up
  With Titan hands to heaven!

Chorus: This great oak-cup to heaven!

CANTO THE THIRD

A month went by. We were hoisting sail! 380
  We had lost all hope of Bill;
Though, laugh as you may at a seaman's tale,
  He was fast in his honey-comb still!
And often he thinks of the chaplain's word
  In the days he shall see no more,—
How the Sweet, indeed, of the Sour hath need;
  And the Sea, likewise, of the Shore.

Chorus: The Chaplain's word of the Air and a Bird;
    Of the Sea, likewise, and the Shore!

'O, had I the wings of a dove, I would fly 391
  To a heaven of aloes and gall!
I have honeyed,' he yammers, 'my nose and mine eye,
  And the bees cannot sting me at all!

And it's O, for the sting of a little brown bee,
Or to blister my hands on a rope,
Or to buffet a thundering broad-side sea
On a deck like a mountain-slope!'

Chorus: With her mast snapt short, and a list to port
And a deck like a mountain-slope.

But alas, and he thinks of the chaplain's voice
When that roar from the woods out-brake—
R-r-re-joice! R-r-re-joice! Now wherefore rejoice
In the music a bear could make?
'Tis a judgment, may-be, that I stick in this tree;
Yet in this I out-argued him fair!
Though I live, though I die, in this honey-comb pie,
By Pope John, there's no sense in a bear!

Chorus: Notes in a nightingale, plums in a pie,
By'r Lakin, no *Sense* in a *Bear!*

He knew not our anchor was heaved from the mud:
He was growling it over again,
When—a strange sound suddenly froze his blood
And curdled his big slow brain!—
A marvellous sound, as of great steel claws
Gripping the bark of his tree,
Softly ascended! Like lightning ended
His honey-comb reverie!

Chorus: The honey-comb quivered! The little leaves shivered!
Something was climbing the tree!

Something that breathed like a fat sea-cook,
Or a pirate of fourteen ton!
But it clomb like a cat (tho' the whole tree shook)
Stealthily tow'rds the sun,

Till, as Black Bill gapes at the little blue ring
Overhead, which he calls the sky,
It is clean blotted out by a monstrous Thing
Which—*hath larded its nose and its eye.*

Chorus: O, well for thee, Bill, that this monstrous Thing
Hath blinkered its little red eye.

Still as a mouse lies Bill with his face
Low down in the dark sweet gold,
While this monster turns round in the leaf-fringed space!
Then—taking a good firm hold,
As the skipper descending the cabin-stair,
Tail-first, with a vast slow tread,
Solemnly, softly, cometh this Bear
Straight down o'er the Bo'sun's head.

Chorus: Solemnly—slowly—cometh this Bear,
Tail-first o'er the Bo'sun's head.

Nearer—nearer—then all Bill's breath
Out-bursts in one leap and yell!
And this Bear thinks: 'Now am I gripped from beneath
By a roaring devil from hell!'
And madly Bill clutches his brown bow-legs,
And madly this Bear doth hale,
With his little red eyes fear-mad for the skies
And Bill's teeth fast in his tail.

Chorus: Small wonder a Bear should quail!
To have larded his nose, to have greased his eyes,
And be stung at the last in his tail.

Pull, Bo'sun! Pull, Bear! In the hot sweet gloom,
  Pull Bruin, pull Bill, for the skies!
Pull—out of their gold with a bombard's boom
  Come Black Bill's honeyed thighs!
Pull! Up! Up! Up! with a scuffle and scramble,
  To that little blue ring of bliss,
This Bear doth go with our Bo'sun in tow
  Stinging his tail, I wis.

Chorus: And this Bear thinks—'Many great bees I know,
    But there never was Bee like this!'

. . . . .

All in the gorgeous death of day
  We had slipped from our emerald creek,
And our *Cloud i' the Sun* was careening away
  With the old gay flag at the peak,
When suddenly, out of the purple wood,
  Breast-high thro' the lilies there danced
A tall lean figure, black as a nigger,
  That shouted and waved and pranced!

Chorus: A gold-greased figure, but black as a nigger,
    Waving his shirt as he pranced!

''Tis Hylas! 'Tis Hylas!' our chaplain flutes,
  And our skipper he looses a shout!
''Tis Bill! Black Bill, in his old sea-boots!
  Stand by to bring her about!
Har-r-rd a-starboard!' And round we came,
  With a lurch and a dip and a roll,
And a banging boom thro' the rose-red gloom
  For our old Black Bo'sun's soul!

Chorus! Alive! Not dead! Tho' behind his head
    He'd a seraphin's aureole!

. . . . .

And our chaplain he sniffs, as Bill finished his tale,
(With the honey still scenting his hair!)
O'er a plate of salt beef and a mug of old ale—
'By Pope John, there's no sense in a bear!'
And we laughed, but our Bo'sun he solemnly growls
—'Till the sails of yon heavens be furled,
It taketh—now, mark!—all the beasts in the Ark,
Teeth and claws, too, to make a good world!'

Chorus: Till the great—blue—sails—be—furled,
It taketh—now, mark!—all the beasts in the Ark,
Teeth and claws, too, to make a good world!

Alfred Noyes.

The Well of St. Keyne

A Well there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen;
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm-tree stand beside,
And behind doth an ash-tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveller came to the Well of St. Keyne;
Joyfully he drew nigh,
For from cock-crow he had been travelling,
And there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he,
And he sat down upon the bank
Under the willow-tree.

There came a man from the house hard by
At the Well to fill his pail;

On the Well-side he rested it,
  And he bade the Stranger hail.

'Now art thou a bachelor, Stranger?' quoth he
  'For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
  That ever thou didst in thy life.

'Or has thy good woman, if one thou hast,
  Ever here in Cornwall been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life
  She has drank of the Well of St. Keyne.'

'I have left a good woman who never was here,'
  The Stranger he made reply,
'But that my draught should be the better for that,
  I pray you answer me why?'

'St. Keyne,' quoth the Cornish-man, 'many a time
  Drank of this crystal Well,
And before the Angel summon'd her
  She laid on the water a spell.

'If the Husband of this gifted Well
  Shall drink before his Wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
  For he shall be Master for life.

'But if the Wife should drink of it first, . .
  God help the Husband then!'
The Stranger stoopt to the Well of St. Keyne,
  And drank of the water again.

'You drank of the Well I warrant betimes?'
  He to the Cornish-man said:
But the Cornish-man smiled as the Stranger spake,
  And sheepishly shook his head.

'I hasten'd as soon as the wedding was done,
  And left my Wife in the porch;
But i' faith she had been wiser than me,
  For she took a bottle to Church.'

Robert Southey.

The Battle of Blenheim

It was a summer evening,
  Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he before his cottage door
  Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
  Roll something large and round,
Which he beside the rivulet
  In playing there had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
  Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
  And with a natural sigh,
''Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,
'Who fell in the great victory.

'I find them in the garden,
  For there's many here about;
And often when I go to plough,
  The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men,' said he,
'Were slain in that great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
'Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for.'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,
'Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But every body said,' quoth he,
'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
A new-born baby, died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know must be
After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene.'
'Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!'
Said little Wilhelmine.

'Nay . . nay . . my little girl,' quoth he,
'It was a famous victory.

'And every body praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win.'
'But what good came of it at last?'
Quoth little Peterkin.
'Why, that I cannot tell,' said he,
'But 'twas a famous victory.'

Robert Southey.

The Stone

A MAN! a man! There is a man loose in Canada,
A man of heroic mould, a 'throwback' of earlier ages,
Vigorous, public-spirited, not afraid of work!
A doer of deeds, not a dreamer and babbler;
A man, simple, direct, unaffected.
Such a one as Walt Whitman would have gloried in,
And made immortal in rugged man-poetry—
Vast polyphloesboean verses such as erstwhile he bellowed
Through roaring storm winds to the bull-mouthed Atlantic.

And yesterday the man passed among us unnoted!
Did his deed and went his way without boasting,
Leaving his act to speak, himself silent!

And I, beholding the marvel, stood for a space astonished,
Then threw up my hat and chortled,
And whooped in dithyrambic exultation.

Hark to my tale!
On the sixteenth side-road of the township of Ekfrid,
Just south of the second concession line, some rods from the corner,

There was a stone, a stone in the road, a stumbling-block;
A jagged tooth of granite dropped from the jaw of a glacier
In an earlier age when the summers were colder;
A rock that horses tripped on, wheels bumped on, and sleigh-runners scrunched on,
And no man in all the land had the gumption to dig it out.
Path-master after path-master, full of his pride of office,
Rode by with haughty brow, and regarded it not,
Seeing only the weeds in the field of the amateur farmer,
And scrawling minatory letters ordering them cut,
But leaving the stone.
Oft in my hot youth I, riding in a lumber waggon,
By that lurking stone was catapulted skyward,
And picked myself up raging and vowing to dig it out—
But dug it not. I didn't have a spade,
Or, if I had a spade, I had a lame back—always an excuse.
And the stone stayed.
As passed the years—good years, bad years,
Years that were wet or dry, lean years and fat years,
Roaring election years (mouthing reforms); in short, all years
The oldest inhabitants keep in stock—there grew a tradition
About the stone. Men, it was said, had tried to move it,
But it was a stubborn boulder, deep sunk in the earth,
And could only be moved by dynamite, at vast cost to the council;
But every councillor was a watch-dog of the treasury,
And the stone stayed.

Since the memory of man runneth the stone was there.
It had stubbed the toe of the Algonquin brave, and haply
Had tripped the ferocious marauding Iroquois.
It had jolted the slow, wobbling ox-cart of the pioneer;
Jolted the lumber waggons, democrats, buggies, sulkies;
Jolted the pungs, crotches, stoneboats, bobsleighs, cutters;
Upset loads of bolts, staves, cordwood, loads of logs and hay;
Jolted threshing machines, traction engines, automobiles,
Milk waggons, with cans of whey, envied of querulous swine;
It had shattered the dreams of farmers, figuring on crops;
Of drovers planning the sharp deals;
Of peddlers, agents, doctors, preachers;
It had jolted lovers into closer embraces, to their bashful delight;
But mostly it had shaken men into sinful tempers—
A wicked stone, a disturbing stone, a stumbling-block—
A stone in the middle of the road—
Insolent as a bank, obstructive as a merger!

Year after year the road flowed around it,
Now on the right, now on the left;
But always on dark nights flowing straight over it,
Jolting the belated traveller into a passion black as midnight.
Making his rocking vocabulary slop over
With all the shorter and uglier words.
Boys grew to manhood and men grew to dotage.
And year after year they did statute-labour

By cutting the thistles and golden-rod, milkweeds and burdocks,
But left the stone untouched.
There is a merry tale that I heard in my childhood,
Standing between my father's knees, before the open fireplace,
Watching the sparks make soldiers on the blazing backlog,
While the shadows danced on the low-beamed ceiling.
A pretty tale, such as children love, and it comes to me now;
Comes with the sharp, crisp smell of wood smoke,
The crackle of flaming cordwood on the dockers,
The dancing shadows and the hand on my tousled head—
A clear memory, a dear memory, and ever the stone
As it lay in my path on the roadway brought back the story—
The loving voice, and, at the close, the laughter.

'Once upon a time there was a king, a mighty ruler,
Deep in the lore of human hearts, wise as a serpent,
Who placed a stone in the road, in the midst of his kingdom,
On the way to his palace, where all men must pass it.
Straightway the people turned aside, turning to right and to left of it.
Statesmen, scholars, courtiers, noblemen, merchants,
Beggars, labourers, farmers, soldiers, generals, men of all classes,
Passed the stone, and none tried to move it
To clear the path of the travelling multitude.
But one day came a man, a kindly poor man,
Who thought it a shame that the stone should be there,
A stumbling-block to the nation. Bowing his back

He put his shoulder to it, and behold a marvel!
The stone was but a shell, hollow as a bowl!
A child might have moved it.
And in the hollow was a purse of gold, and with it a writing:
"Let him who hath the public spirit to move the stone
Keep the purse and buy a courtly robe,
And come to the palace to serve the king as prime minister."
So the kindly poor man who had public spirit
Became the chief ruler of all the nation.
When the news was told of them, all men rushed to the highways
And moved away the stones, but found no purse of gold;
But they cleared the roads of stones, and the "Good Roads Movement"
Went through without cost because the king was wise
And well understood our weak human nature.'

Ever when passing the stone I remembered this story
And smiled, touched by memories of childhood,
But knew there was no purse under it; there might be an angle-worm,
But I was not going fishing—and the stone stayed.

Now mark the sequel, the conclusion of the matter!
Yesterday a man went by—whether a neighbour or stranger,
No man can tell me, though I have questioned widely,
Questioned eagerly, longing to do him honour,
To chant his name in song, or cunningly engrave it
In monumental brass, with daedal phantasies—
To make it a landmark, a beacon to all future ages.
This good man, earnest, public-spirited,
Not fearing work, scorning tradition,
Doing his duty as he saw it, not waiting an order,

Dug out the stone and made it a matter of laughter,
For it was no boulder, deep-rooted, needing dynamite,
But just a little stone, about the size of a milk pail.

A child might have moved it, and yet it had bumped us
For three generations because we lacked public spirit.
I blush with shame as I pass the stone now lying
In the roadside ditch where the good man rolled it,
And left it where all men may see it—a symbol, a portent.
Tremble, ye Oppressors! Quake, ye Financial Pirates!
Your day is at hand, for there is a man loose in Canada! 131
A man to break through your illegal labyrinths,
A Theseus to cope with your corporate Minotaurs,
A Hercules to clean out your Augean stables of grafters,
A man who moves stones from the path of his fellows!
And makes smooth the Way of the Worker!
And such a man may move you! Tremble, I say!

Peter MacArthur.

The Machine

Since Thursday he'd been working overtime,
With only three short hours for food and sleep.
When no sleep came because of the dull beat
Of his fagged brain, and he could scarcely eat.
And now on Saturday when he was free,
And all his fellows hurried home to tea,
He was so dazed that he could hardly keep
His hands from going through the pantomime
Of keeping-even sheets in his machine—
The sleek machine that day and night,
Fed with paper virgin white,

Through those glaring, flaring hours
In the incandescent light
Printed children's picture-books—
Red and yellow, blue and green,
With sunny fields and running brooks,
Ships at sea and golden sands,
Queer white towns in Eastern lands,
Tossing palms on coral strands—
Until at times the clank and whirr and click,
And the shimmer of white paper turned him sick;
And though at first the colours made him glad,
They soon were dancing in his brain like mad,
And kept on flaring through his burning head—
Now in a flash the workshop flaming red,
Now blazing green, now staring blue,
And then the yellow glow too well he knew—
Until the sleek machine with roar and glare
Began to take him in a dazzling snare,
When, fascinated, with a senseless stare
He felt himself drawn towards it till his hair
Was caught betwixt the rollers; but his hand,
Almost before his brain could understand,
Had clutched the lever and the wheels were stopped
Just in the nick of time, though now he dropped
Half-senseless on the littered workshop floor;
And he'd lain dazed a minute there or more
When his machine-girl helped him to a seat.
But soon again he was upon his feet
And tending that unsatisfied machine,
And printing pictures red and blue and green,
Until again the green and blue and red
Went jigging in a riot through his head;
And wildest of the raging rout
The blinding, screeching, racking yellow,
A crazy devil of a fellow,
Over all the others seemed to shout.

For hands must not be idle when the year
Is getting through and Christmas drawing near,
With piles on piles of picture-books to print
For people who spend money without stint,
And while they're paying down their liberal gold
Guess little what is bought and what is sold.

But he at last was free till Monday, free
To sleep, to eat, to dream, to sulk, to walk,
To laugh, to sing, to whistle, or to talk. . . .
If only through his brain unceasingly
The wheels would not keep whirring, while the smell—
The oily smell of thick and sticky glaze—
Clung to his nostrils till 'twas hard to tell
If he were really out in the fresh air;
And still before his eyes the blind white glare,
And then the colours dancing in his head,
A maddening maze of yellow, blue, and red.
So on he wandered in a kind of daze,
Too racked with sleeplessness to think of bed
Save as a hell where you must toss and toss,
With colours shooting in insane criss-cross
Before wide, prickling, gritty, sleepless eyes.

But, as he walked along the darkening street,
Too tired to rest and far too spent to eat,
The swish and patter of the passing feet,
The living human murmur and keen cries,
The deep cool shadows of the coming night
Surging about the jets of clustered light,
And the fresh breathing of the rain-washed air,
Brought something of sweet healing to his mind;
And, though he trailed along as if half-blind,
Yet often on the pavement he would stop
To gaze at goods displayed within a shop,
And wonder in a dull and lifeless way
What they had cost and who'd the price to pay.

But those two kinds of shop which as a boy
Had been to him a never-failing joy,
The bookshop and the fruitshop, he passed by
As if their colours seared his wincing eye,
For still he feared the yellow, blue, and red
Would start that devils' dancing in his head.

And soon through throngs of people, almost gay
To be let loose from work, he pushed his way;
And ripples of their careless laughter stole
Like waves of cooling water through his soul;
While sometimes he would lift his aching eyes
And see a child's face flushed with proud surprise,
As, gripping both its parents' hands quite tight,
It found itself in fairylands of light,
Walking with grown-up people through the night:
Then, turning, with a shudder he would see
Poor painted faces leering frightfully,
And so drop back from heaven again to hell.

And then somehow, though how he could not tell,
He found that he was walking through the throng
Quite happy with a young girl at his side—
A young girl apple-cheeked and eager-eyed;
And her frank, friendly chatter seemed a song
To him who ne'er till now had heard life sing;
And youth within him kindled quick and strong
As he drank in that careless chattering.
She told him how just lately she had come
From some far Northern isle to earn her bread;
And in a stuffy office all day long
In shiny ledgers, with a splitting head,
She added dazzling figures till they danced
And tied themselves in wriggling knots and pranced
And scrambled helter-skelter o'er the page;
And though it seemed already quite an age
Since she had left her home, from end to end

Of this big town she had not any friend:
At times she almost dreaded she'd go dumb
With not a soul to speak to—for at home
In her own Island she knew every one. . . .
No strangers there—save when the tinkers came
With pots and pans aglinting in the sun—
You saw the tin far off like glancing flame
As all about the Island they would roam. . . .
Then, of themselves at home, there were six brothers,
Five sisters, with herself, besides the others—
Two homeless bairns whom, having lost their mothers,
Her mother'd taken in among her own. . . .
And she in all her life had hardly known
Her mother with no baby at her breast—
She'd always sing to hush them all to sleep,
And sang too for the dancing, sang to keep
The feet in time and tune, and still sang best,
Clean best of all the singers of the Isle.
And as she talked of home he saw her smile
With happy far-off gaze, and then, as though
In wonder how she'd come to chatter so
To this pale grave-eyed boy, she paused, half shy,
And then she laughed, with laughter clear and true;
And looked into his eyes and he laughed too,
And they were happy, hardly knowing why.

And now he told her of his life and how
He too had been nigh friendless until now:
And soon he talked to her about his work,
But as he spoke of it, as with a jerk
The light dropped from his eyes. He seemed to slip
Once more in the machine's relentless grip,
And hear again the clank and whirr and click,
And see the dancing colours and the glare,
Until his dizzy brain again turned sick;
And, seeing him look round with vacant air,

Fierce pity cut her to the very quick;
And as her eyes with keen distress were filled
She touched his hand, and soon her kind touch stilled
The agony; and so, to bring him ease,
She told more of that Isle in Northern seas
Where she was born and of the folk at home—
And how all night you heard the wash of foam. . . .
Sometimes on stormy nights against the pane
The sousing spray would rattle just like rain,
And oft the high-tides scoured the threshold clean. . . .

And as she talked he saw the sea-light glint
In her dark eyes—and then the sleek machine
Lost hold on him at last and ceased to print:
And in his eyes there sprang a kindred light
As hand in hand they wandered through the night.

W. W. Gibson.

Last May a Braw Wooer

Last May a braw wooer cam down the lang glen,
  And sair wi' his love he did deave me:
I said there was naething I hated like men—
  The deuce gae wi'm to believe me, believe me,
  The deuce gae wi'm to believe me.

He spak o' the darts in my bonnie black een,
  And vow'd for my love he was dying;
I said he might die when he liked for Jean:
  The Lord forgie me for lying, for lying,
  The Lord forgie me for lying!

A weel-stockèd mailen, himsel' for the laird,
  And marriage aff-hand, were his proffers:
I never loot on that I kend it, or car'd:
  But thought I might hae waur offers, waur offers,
  But thought I might hae waur offers.

But what wad ye think? in a fortnight or less,
The deil tak his taste to gae near her!
He up the lang loan to my black cousin Bess,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her, could bear her,
Guess ye how, the jad! I could bear her.

But a' the niest week as I fretted wi' care,
I gaed to the tryst o' Dalgarnock;
But wha but my fine fickle lover was there?
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock, a warlock,
I glowr'd as I'd seen a warlock.

But owre my left shouther I gae him a blink,
Lest neebors might say I was saucy;
My wooer he caper'd as he'd been in drink,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie, dear lassie,
And vow'd I was his dear lassie.

I spier'd for my cousin fu' couthy and sweet,
Gin she had recover'd her hearin',
And how her new shoon fit her auld schachl't feet—
But heavens! how he fell a swearin', a swearin',
But, heavens! how he fell a swearin'.

He beggèd for Gudesake I wad be his wife,
Or else I wad kill him wi' sorrow:
So e'en to preserve the poor body in life,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow, to-morrow,
I think I maun wed him to-morrow.

Robert Burns.

Simon Legree—A Negro Sermon

LEGREE's big house was white and green.
His cotton-fields were the best to be seen.
He had strong horses and opulent cattle,
And bloodhounds bold, with chains that would rattle.

His garret was full of curious things:
Books of magic, bags of gold,
And rabbits' feet on long twine strings.
But he went down to the Devil.

Legree he sported a brass-buttoned coat,
A snake-skin necktie, a blood-red shirt.
Legree he had a beard like a goat,
And a thick hairy neck, and eyes like dirt.
His puffed-out cheeks were fish-belly white,
He had great long teeth, and an appetite.
He ate raw meat, 'most every meal,
And rolled his eyes till the cat would squeal.
His fist was an enormous size
To mash poor niggers that told him lies:
He was surely a witch-man in disguise.
But he went down to the Devil.

He wore hip-boots, and would wade all day
To capture his slaves that had fled away.
But he went down to the Devil.
He beat poor Uncle Tom to death
Who prayed for Legree with his last breath.
Then Uncle Tom to Eva flew,
To the high sanctoriums bright and new;
And Simon Legree stared up beneath,
And cracked his heels, and ground his teeth.
And went down to the Devil.

He crossed the yard in the storm and gloom;
He went into his grand front room.
He said, 'I killed him, and I don't care.'
He kicked a hound, he gave a swear;
He tightened his belt, he took a lamp,
Went down cellar to the webs and damp.
There in the middle of the mouldy floor
He heaved up a slab, he found a door—
And went down to the Devil.

His lamp blew out, his eyes burned bright.
Simon Legree stepped down all night—
Down, down to the Devil.
Simon Legree he reached the place,
He saw one half of the human race,
He saw the Devil on a wide green throne,
Gnawing the meat from a big ham-bone,
And he said to Mister Devil:

'I see that you have much to eat—
A red ham-bone is surely sweet.
I see that you have lion's feet;
I see your frame is fat and fine,
I see you drink your poison wine —
Blood and burning turpentine.'

And the Devil said to Simon Legree:
'I like your style, so wicked and free.
Come sit and share my throne with me,
And let us bark and revel.'
And there they sit and gnash their teeth,
And each one wears a hop-vine wreath.
They are matching pennies and shooting craps,
They are playing poker and taking naps.
And old Legree is fat and fine:
He eats the fire, he drinks the wine —
Blood and burning turpentine—
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil;
Down, down with the Devil.

Vachel Lindsay.

The Red Fisherman

OR THE DEVIL'S DECOY

'Oh flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified.'
Romeo and Juliet.

The Abbot arose, and closed his book,
And donned his sandal shoon,

And wandered forth, alone, to look
  Upon the summer moon:
A starlight sky was o'er his head,
  A quiet breeze around;
And the flowers a thrilling fragrance shed
  And the waves a soothing sound:
It was not an hour, nor a scene, for aught
  But love and calm delight;
Yet the holy man had a cloud of thought
  On his wrinkled brow that night.
He gazed on the river that gurgled by,
  But he thought not of the reeds;
He clasped his gilded rosary,
  But he did not tell the beads;
If he looked to the heaven, 'twas not to invoke
  The Spirit that dwelleth there;
If he opened his lips, the words they spoke
  Had never the tone of prayer.
A pious priest might the Abbot seem,
  He had swayed the crozier well;
But what was the theme of the Abbot's dream,
  The Abbot were loth to tell.

Companionless, for a mile or more,
He traced the windings of the shore,
Oh, beauteous is that river still,
As it winds by many a sloping hill,
And many a dim o'erarching grove,
And many a flat and sunny cove,
And terraced lawns, whose bright arcades
The honeysuckle sweetly shades,
And rocks, whose very crags seem bowers,
So gay they are with grass and flowers!
But the Abbot was thinking of scenery
  About as much, in sooth,
As a lover thinks of constancy,
  Or an advocate of truth.

He did not mark how the skies in wrath
Grew dark above his head;
He did not mark how the mossy path
Grew damp beneath his tread;
And nearer he came, and still more near,
To a pool, in whose recess
The water had slept for many a year,
Unchanged and motionless;
From the river stream it spread away
The space of half a rood;
The surface had the hue of clay
And the scent of human blood;
The trees and the herbs that round it grew
Were venomous and foul,
And the birds that through the bushes flew
Were the vulture and the owl;
The water was as dark and rank
As ever a Company pumped,
And the perch, that was netted and laid on the bank,
Grew rotten while it jumped;
And bold was he who thither came
At midnight, man or boy,
For the place was cursed with an evil name,
And that name was 'The Devil's Decoy'!

The Abbot was weary as abbot could be,
And he sat down to rest on the stump of a tree:
When suddenly rose a dismal tone,—
Was it a song, or was it a moan?—

'O ho! O ho!
Above,—below,—
Lightly and brightly they glide and go!
The hungry and keen on the top are leaping,
The lazy and fat in the depths are sleeping;
Fishing is fine when the pool is muddy,
Broiling is rich when the coals are ruddy!'—

In a monstrous fright, by the murky light,
He looked to the left and he looked to the right,
And what was the vision close before him,
That flung such a sudden stupor o'er him?
'Twas a sight to make the hair uprise,
  And the life-blood colder run:
The startled Priest struck both his thighs,
  And the abbey clock struck one!

All alone, by the side of the pool,
A tall man sat on a three-legged stool,
Kicking his heels on the dewy sod,
And putting in order his reel and rod;
Red were the rags his shoulders wore,
And a high red cap on his head he bore;
His arms and his legs were long and bare;
And two or three locks of long red hair
Were tossing about his scraggy neck,
Like a tattered flag o'er a splitting wreck.
It might be time, or it might be trouble,
Had bent that stout back nearly double,
Sunk in their deep and hollow sockets
That blazing couple of Congreve rockets,
And shrunk and shrivelled that tawny skin,
Till it hardly covered the bones within.
The line the Abbot saw him throw
Had been fashioned and formed long ages ago,
And the hands that worked his foreign vest
Long years ago had gone to their rest:
You would have sworn, as you looked on them,
He had fished in the Flood with Ham and Shem!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Minnow or gentle, worm or fly,—
It seemed not such to the Abbot's eye;

Gaily it glittered with jewel and gem,
And its shape was the shape of a diadem.
It was fastened a gleaming hook about
By a chain within and a chain without;
The Fisherman gave it a kick and a spin,
And the water fizzed as it tumbled in!

From the bowels of the earth,
Strange and varied sounds had birth;
Now the battle's bursting peal,
Neigh of steed, and clang of steel;
Now an old man's hollow groan
Echoed from the dungeon stone;
Now the weak and wailing cry
Of a stripling's agony!—
Cold by this was the midnight air;
  But the Abbot's blood ran colder,
When he saw a gasping Knight lie there,
With a gash beneath his clotted hair,
  And a hump upon his shoulder.
And the loyal churchman strove in vain
  To mutter a Pater Noster;
For he who writhed in mortal pain
Was camped that night on Bosworth plain—
  The cruel Duke of Gloster!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a haunch of princely size,
Filling with fragrance earth and skies.
The corpulent Abbot knew full well
The swelling form, and the steaming smell;
Never a monk that wore a hood
Could better have guessed the very wood
Where the noble hart had stood at bay,
Weary and wounded, at close of day.

Sounded then the noisy glee
Of a revelling company,—
Sprightly story, wicked jest,
Rated servant, greeted guest,
Flow of wine, and flight of cork,
Stroke of knife, and thrust of fork:
But, where'er the board was spread,
Grace, I ween, was never said!—
Pulling and tugging, the Fisherman sat;
  And the Priest was ready to vomit,
When he hauled out a gentleman, fine and fat,
With a belly as big as a brimming vat,
  And a nose as red as a comet.
'A capital stew,' the Fisherman said,
  'With cinnamon and sherry!'
And the Abbot turned away his head,
For his brother was lying before him dead,
  The Mayor of St. Edmund's Bury!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
It was a bundle of beautiful things,—
A peacock's tail, and a butterfly's wings,
A scarlet slipper, an auburn curl,
A mantle of silk, and a bracelet of pearl,
And a packet of letters, from whose sweet fold
Such a stream of delicate odours rolled,
That the Abbot fell on his face, and fainted,
And deemed his spirit was half-way sainted.

Sounds seemed dropping from the skies,
Stifled whispers, smothered sighs,
And the breath of vernal gales,
And the voice of nightingales:
But the nightingales were mute,
Envious, when an unseen lute

Shaped the music of its chords
Into passion's thrilling words:
'Smile, Lady, smile!—I will not set
Upon my brow the coronet,
Till thou wilt gather roses white
To wear around its gems of light.
Smile, Lady, smile!—I will not see
Rivers and Hastings bend the knee,
Till those bewitching lips of thine
Will bid me rise in bliss from mine.
Smile, Lady, smile!—for who would win
A loveless throne through guilt and sin?
Or who would reign o'er vale and hill,
If woman's heart were rebel still?'

One jerk, and there a lady lay,
  A lady wondrous fair;
But the rose of her lip had faded away,
And her cheek was as white and as cold as clay,
  And torn was her raven hair.
'Ah ha!' said the Fisher, in merry guise,
  'Her gallant was hooked before';
And the Abbot heaved some piteous sighs,
For oft he had blessed those deep blue eyes,
  The eyes of Mistress Shore!

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
As he took forth a bait from his iron box.
Many the cunning sportsman tried,
Many he flung with a frown aside;
A minstrel's harp, and a miser's chest,
A hermit's cowl, and a baron's crest,
Jewels of lustre, robes of price,
Tomes of heresy, loaded dice,
And golden cups of the brightest wine
That ever was pressed from Burgundy vine.
There was a perfume of sulphur and nitre,
As he came at last to a bishop's mitre!

From top to toe the Abbot shook,
As the Fisherman armed his golden hook,
And awfully were his features wrought
By some dark stream or wakened thought.
Look how the fearful felon gazes
On the scaffold his country's vengeance raises,
When the lips are cracked and the jaws are dry
With the thirst which only in death shall die:
Mark the mariner's frenzied frown
As the swaling wherry settles down,
When peril has numbed the sense and will,
Though the hand and the foot may struggle still:
Wilder far was the Abbot's glance,
Deeper far was the Abbot's trance:
Fixed as a monument, still as air,
He bent no knee, and he breathed no prayer;
But he signed—he knew not why or how—
The sign of the Cross on his clammy brow.

There was turning of keys, and creaking of locks,
And he stalked away with his iron box.
'O ho! O ho!
The cock doth crow.
It is time for the Fisher to rise and go.
Fair luck to the Abott, fair luck to the shrine!
He hath gnawed in twain my choicest line;
Let him swim to the north, let him swim to the south,
The Abbot will carry my hook in his mouth!'

The Abbot had preached for many years
With as clear articulation
As ever was heard in the House of Peers
Against Emancipation;
His words had made battalions quake,
Had roused the zeal of martyrs,
Had kept the Court an hour awake,
And the king himself three-quarters:

But ever from that hour, 'tis said,
He stammered and he stuttered,
As if an axe went through his head
With every word he uttered.
He stuttered o'er blessing, he stuttered o'er ban,
He stuttered drunk or dry;
And none but he and the Fisherman
Could tell the reason why!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

At the Cedars

You had two girls—Baptiste—
One is Virginie—
Hold hard—Baptiste!
Listen to me.

The whole drive was jammed
In that bend at the Cedars,
The rapids were rammed
With the logs tight rammed
And crammed; you might know
The Devil had clinched them below.

We worked three days—not a budge,
'She's as tight as a wedge, on the ledge,'
Says our foreman;
'Mon Dieu! boys, look here,
We must get this thing clear.'

He cursed at the men
And we went for it then;
With our cant-dogs arow,
We just gave he-yo-ho;
When she gave a big shove
From above.

The gang yelled and tore
For the shore,

The logs gave a grind
Like a wolf's jaws behind,
And as quick as a flash,
With a shove and a crash,
They were down in a mash,
But I and ten more,
All but Isaac Dufour,
Were ashore.

He leaped on a log in the front of the rush,
And shot out from the bind
While the jam roared behind;
As he floated along
He balanced his pole
And tossed us a song.
But just as we cheered,
Up darted a log from the bottom,
Leaped thirty feet square and fair,
And came down on his own.

He went up like a block
With the shock,
And when he was there
In the air,
Kissed his hand to the land;
When he dropped
My heart stopped,
For the first logs had caught him
And crushed him;
When he rose in his place
There was blood on his face.

There were some girls, Baptiste,
Picking berries on the hillside,
Where the river curls, Baptiste,
You know—on the still side.

One was down by the water,
She saw Isaac
Fall back.

She did not scream, Baptiste,
She launched her canoe;
It did seem, Baptiste,
That she wanted to die too,
For before you could think
The birch cracked like a shell
In that rush of hell,
And I saw them both sink—

Baptiste!—
He had two girls,
One is Virginie,
What God calls the other
Is not known to me.

Duncan Campbell Scott.

A Mother in Egypt

'About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon the throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill.'

Is THE noise of grief in the palace over the river
For this silent one at my side?
There came a hush in the night, and he rose with his hands a-quiver
Like lotus petals adrift on the swing of the tide.
O small soft hands, the day groweth old for sleeping!
O small still feet, rise up, for the hour is late!
Rise up, my son, for I hear them mourning and weeping
In the temple down by the gate.

Hushed is the face that was wont to brighten with laughter
When I sang at the mill.
And silence unbroken shall greet the sorrowful dawns hereafter,
The house shall be still.
Voice after voice takes up the burden of wailing,—
Do you heed, do you hear?—in the high-priest's house by the wall;
But mine is the grief, and their sorrow is all unavailing.
Will he wake at their call?

Something I saw at the broad, dim wings half folding
The passionless brow,
Something I saw of the sword the shadowy hands were holding,—
What matters it now?
I held you close, dear face, as I knelt and hearkened
To the wind that cried last night like a soul in sin,
When the broad, bright stars dropped down and the soft sky darkened,
And the Presence moved therein.

I have heard men speak in the market-place of the city,
Low-voiced, in a breath,
Of a god who is stronger than ours, and who knows not changing nor pity,
Whose anger is death.
Nothing I know of the lords of the outland races,
But Amun is gentle and Hathor the Mother is mild,
And who would descend from the light of the peaceful places
To war on a child?

Yet here he lies, with a scarlet pomegranate petal
Blown down on his cheek.
The slow sun sinks to the sand like a shield of some burnished metal,
But he does not speak.
I have called, I have sung, but he neither will hear nor waken;
So lightly, so whitely he lies in the curve of my arm,
Like a feather let fall from the bird that the arrow hath taken.
Who could see him, and harm?

'The swallow flies home to her sleep in the eaves of the altar,
And the crane to her nest,'—
So do we sing o'er the mill, and why, ah, why should I falter,
Since he goes to his rest?
Does he play in their flowers as he played among these with his mother?
Do the gods smile downward and love him and give him their care?
Guard him well, O ye gods, till I come; lest the wrath of that Other
Should reach him there!

Marjorie L. C. Pickthall.

The Yarn of the 'Nancy Bell'

'Twas on the shores that round our coast
From Deal to Ramsgate span,
That I found alone on a piece of stone
An elderly naval man.

His hair was weedy, his beard was long,
And weedy and long was he,
And I heard this wight on the shore recite,
In a singular minor key:

'Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.'

And he shook his fists and he tore his hair,
Till I really felt afraid,
For I couldn't help thinking the man had been drinking,
And so I simply said:

'Oh, elderly man, it's little I know
Of the duties of men of the sea,
And I'll eat my hand if I understand
However you can be

'At once a cook, and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig.
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.'

Then he gave a hitch to his trousers, which
Is a trick all seamen larn,
And having got rid of a thumping quid,
He spun this painful yarn:

' 'Twas in the good ship *Nancy Bell*
That we sailed to the Indian Sea,
And there on a reef we come to grief,
Which has often occurred to me.

'And pretty nigh all the crew was drowned
(There was seventy-seven o' soul),
And only ten of the *Nancy's* men
Said "Here!" to the muster-roll.

'There was me and the cook and the captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,
And the bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig.

'For a month we'd neither wittles nor drink,
Till a-hungry we did feel,
So we drawed a lot, and accordin' shot
The captain for our meal.

'The next lot fell to the *Nancy's* mate,
And a delicate dish he made;
Then our appetite with the midshipmite
We seven survivors stayed.

'And then we murdered the bo'sun tight,
And he much resembled pig;
Then we wittled free, did the cook and me,
On the crew of the captain's gig.

'Then only the cook and me was left,
And the delicate question, "Which
Of us two goes to the kettle?" arose,
And we argued it out as sich.

'For I loved that cook as a brother, I did,
And that cook he worshipped me;
But we'd both be blowed if we'd either be stowed
In the other chap's hold, you see.

' "I'll be eat if you dines off me," says Tom;
"Yes, that," says I, "you'll be.
I'm boiled if I die, my friend," quoth I;
And "Exactly so," quoth he.

'Says he, "Dear James, to murder me
Were a foolish thing to do,
For don't you see that you can't cook *me*,
While I can—and will—cook *you!*"

'So he boils the water, and takes the salt
And the pepper in portions true
(Which he never forgot), and some chopped shallot,
And some sage and parsley too.

' "Come here," says he, with a proper pride,
Which his smiling features tell,
" 'Twill soothing be if I let you see
How extremely nice you'll smell."

'And he stirred it round and round and round,
And he sniffed at the foaming froth;
When I ups with his heels, and smothers his squeals
In the scum of the boiling broth. 80

'And I eat that cook in a week or less,
And—as I eating be
The last of his chops, why, I almost drops,
For a vessel in sight I see!

. . . . . .

'And I never larf, and I never smile,
And I never lark nor play,
But sit and croak, and a single joke
I have—which is to say:

' "Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,
And the mate of the *Nancy* brig, 90
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,
And the crew of the captain's gig!" '

W. S. Gilbert.

Riding Together

For many, many days together
The wind blew steady from the East;
For many days hot grew the weather,
About the time of our Lady's Feast.

For many days we rode together,
Yet met we neither friend nor foe;
Hotter and clearer grew the weather,
Steadily did the East wind blow.

We saw the trees in the hot, bright weather,
  Clear-cut, with shadows very black,
As freely we rode on together
  With helms unlaced and bridles slack.

And often, as we rode together,
  We, looking down the green-bank'd stream,
Saw flowers in the sunny weather,
  And saw the bubble-making bream.

And in the night lay down together,
  And hung above our heads the rood,
Or watch'd night-long in the dewy weather,
  The while the moon did watch the wood.

Our spears stood bright and thick together,
  Straight out the banners stream'd behind,
As we gallop'd on in the sunny weather,
  With faces turn'd towards the wind.

Down sank our threescore spears together,
  As thick we saw the pagans ride;
His eager face in the clear fresh weather,
  Shone out that last time by my side.

Up the sweep of the bridge we dash'd together,
  It rock'd to the crash of the meeting spears,
Down rain'd the buds of the dear spring weather,
  The elm-tree flowers fell like tears.

There, as we roll'd and writhed together,
  I threw my arms above my head,
For close by my side, in the lovely weather,
  I saw him reel and fall back dead.

I and the slayer met together,
  He waited the death-stroke there in his place,
With thoughts of death, in the lovely weather,
  Gapingly mazed at my madden'd face.

Madly I fought as we fought together;
In vain: the little Christian band
The pagans drown'd, as in stormy weather,
The river drowns low-lying land.

They bound my blood-stained hands together,
They bound his corpse to nod by my side:
Then on we rode, in the bright March weather,
With clash of cymbals did we ride.

We ride no more, no more together;
My prison-bars are thick and strong,
I take no heed of any weather,
The sweet Saints grant I live not long.

William Morris.

Vitai Lampada

THERE's a breathless hush in the Close to-night—
Ten to make the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote—
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

This is the word that, year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with joyful mind 20
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
'Play up! play up! and play the game!'

Sir Henry Newbolt.

He Fell Among Thieves

'Ye have robbed,' said he, 'ye have slaughtered and made an end,
Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?'
'Blood for our blood,' they said.

He laughed: 'If one may settle the score for five,
I am ready: but let the reckoning stand till day;
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive.'
'You shall die at dawn,' said they.

He flung his empty revolver down the slope,
He climbed alone to the eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope 11
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassin river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wistaria trailing in at the window wide;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride. 20

He saw the grey little church across the park,
  The mounds that hide the loved and honoured dead;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
  The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
  The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tape, and the crowd roaring between
  His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
  The long tables, and the faces merry and keen;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
  The Dons on the daïs serene.

He watched the liner's stem ploughing the foam,
  He felt her trembling speed and the thrash of her screw;
He heard her passengers' voices talking of home,
  He saw the flag she flew.

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
  And strode to his ruin'd camp below the wood;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet;
  His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
  The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white:
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last
  Cut by the eastern height.

'O, glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
  I have lived, I praise and adore Thee.'
                A sword swept.
Over the pass the voices one by one
  Faded, and the hill slept.

Sir Henry Newbolt.

The Vagabond

(TO AN AIR OF SCHUBERT)

GIVE to me the life I love,
  Let the lave go by me,
Give the jolly heaven above
  And the byway nigh me.
Bed in the bush with stars to see,
  Bread I dip in the river—
There's the life for a man like me,
  There's the life for ever.

Let the blow fall soon or late,
  Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
  And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Or let autumn fall on me
  Where afield I linger,
Silencing the bird on tree,
  Biting the blue finger.
White as meal the frosty field—
  Warm the fireside haven—
Not to autumn will I yield,
  Not to winter even!

Let the blow fall soon or late,
  Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
  And the road before me.
Wealth I ask not, hope nor love,
  Nor a friend to know me;
All I ask, the heaven above
  And the road below me.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

The Joys of the Road

Now the joys of the road are chiefly these:
A crimson touch on the hard-wood trees;

A vagrant's morning wide and blue,
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;

A shadowy highway, cool and brown,
Alluring up and enticing down

From rippled water to dappled swamp,
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;

The outward eye, the quiet will,
And the striding heart from hill to hill;

The tempter apple over the fence;
The cobweb bloom on the yellow quince;

The palish asters along the wood,—
A lyric touch of the solitude;

An open hand, an easy shoe,
And a hope to make the day go through,—

Another to sleep with, and a third
To wake me up at the voice of a bird;

The resonant far-listening morn,
And the hoarse whisper of the corn;

The crickets mourning their comrades lost,
In the night's retreat from the gathering frost;

(Or is it their slogan, plaintive and shrill,
As they beat on their corselets, valiant still?)

A hunger fit for the kings of the sea,
And a loaf of bread for Dickon and me;

A thirst like that of the Thirsty Sword
And a jug of cider on the board;

An idle noon, a bubbling spring,
The sea in the pine-tops murmuring;

A scrap of gossip at the ferry;
A comrade neither glum nor merry,

Asking nothing, revealing naught,
But minting his words from a fund of thought,

A keeper of silence eloquent,
Needy, yet royally content,

Of the mettled breed, yet abhorring strife,
And full of the mellow juice of life,

A taster of wine, with an eye for a maid,
Never too bold, and never afraid,

Never heart-whole, never heart-sick,
(These are the things I worship in Dick)

No fidget and no reformer, just
A calm observer of ought and must,

A lover of books, but a reader of man,
No cynic and no charlatan,

Who never defers and never demands,
But, smiling, takes the world in his hands,--

Seeing it good as when God first saw
And gave it the weight of His will for law.

And O the joy that is never won,
But follows and follows the journeying sun,

By marsh and tide, by meadow and stream,
A will-o'-the-wind, a light-o'-dream,

The racy smell of the forest loam,
When the stealthy, sad-heart leaves go home;

The broad gold wake of the afternoon;
The silent fleck of the cold new moon;

The sound of the hollow sea's release
From the stormy tumult to starry peace;

With only another league to wend;
And two brown arms at the journey's end!

These are the joys of the open road—
For him who travels without a load.

Bliss Carman.

The Ladies of St. James's

A PROPER NEW BALLAD OF THE COUNTRY AND THE TOWN

Phyllida amo ante alias.—VIRGIL.

The ladies of St. James's
  Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them,
  With a 'Stand by! Clear the way!'
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
  She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
  Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
  Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at *Ombre,*
  With candles all of wax:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
  She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May dew
  Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!
  They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essence
  Was broken in the air:
But Phillida, my Phyllida!

The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!
They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays for ever,
Their red it never dies;
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her colour comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers to a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!
They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you—for seconds;
They frown on you—for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
Is always true—and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties

Of all the world may be,
For Phyllida,—for Phyllida
Is all the world to me!

Austin Dobson.

Truly Great

My walls outside must have some flowers,
My walls within must have some books;
A house that's small; a garden large,
And in it leafy nooks:

A little gold that's sure each week;
That comes not from my living kind,
But from a dead man in his grave,
Who cannot change his mind:

A lovely wife, and gentle too;
Contented that no eyes but mine
Can see her many charms, nor voice
To call her beauty fine:

Where she would in that stone cage live,
A self-made prisoner with me;
While many a wild bird sang around,
On gate, on bush, on tree:

And she sometimes to answer them,
In her far sweeter voice than all;
Till birds, that loved to look on leaves,
Will dote on a stone wall.

—With this small house, this garden large,
This little gold. this lovely mate,
With health in body, peace at heart—
Show me a man more great.

William Henry Davies.

Goblin Market

MORNING and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry:
'Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries;—
All ripe together
In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy.'

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes:

Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
'Lie close,' Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head:
'We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what soil they fed
Their hungry, thirsty roots?'
'Come, buy,' call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.
'Oh,' cried Lizzie, 'Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men.'
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook:
'Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes.'
'No,' said Lizzie: 'No, no, no;
Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us.'
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.

One had a cat's face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat's pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

  Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,
Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

  Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
'Come buy, come buy.'
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother;
Signalling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One heaved the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
'Come buy, come buy,' was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money:

The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,
The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-paced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty Polly';—
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
'Good folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather.'
'You have much gold upon your head,'
They answered all together:
'Buy from us with a golden curl.'
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red:
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;
She sucked until her lips were sore;
Then flung the emptied rinds away
But gathered up one kernel stone,
And knew not was it night or day
As she turned home alone.

Lizzie met her at the gate
Full of wise upbraidings:

'Dear, you should not stay so late,
Twilight is not good for maidens;
Should not loiter in the glen
In the haunts of goblin men.
Do you not remember Jeanie,
How she met them in the moonlight,
Took their gifts both choice and many,
Ate their fruits and wore their flowers
Plucked from bowers
Where summer ripens at all hours?
But ever in the noonlight
She pined and pined away;
Sought them by night and day,
Found them no more, but dwindled and grew grey;
Then fell with the first snow,
While to this day no grass will grow
Where she lies low:
I planted daisies there a year ago
That never blow.
You should not loiter so.'
'Nay, hush,' said Laura:
'Nay, hush, my sister:
I ate and ate my fill,
Yet my mouth waters still;
To-morrow night I will
Buy more': and kissed her:
'Have done with sorrow;
I'll bring you plums to-morrow
Fresh on their mother twigs,
Cherries worth getting;
You cannot think what figs
My teeth have met in,
What melons icy-cold
Piled on a dish of gold
Too huge for me to hold,
What peaches with a velvet nap,

Pellucid grapes without one seed:
Odorous indeed must be the mead
Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
With lilies at the brink,
And sugar-sweet their sap.'

Golden head by golden head,
Like two pigeons in one nest
Folded in each other's wings,
They lay down in their curtained bed:
Like two blossoms on one stem,
Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
Like two wands of ivory
Tipped with gold for awful kings.
Moon and stars gazed in at them,
Wind sang to them lullaby,
Lumbering owls forbore to fly,
Not a bat flapped to and fro
Round their nest:
Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
When the first cock crowed his warning,
Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
Laura rose with Lizzie:
Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
Aired and set to rights the house,
Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
Fed their poultry, sat and sewed;
Talked as modest maidens should:
Lizzie with an open heart,
Laura in an absent dream,
One content, one sick in part;
One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came:
They went with pitchers to the reedy brook;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from its deep;
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags,
Then turning homewards said: 'The sunset flushes
Those furthest loftiest crags;
Come, Laura, not another maiden lags,
No wilful squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep.'
But Laura loitered still among the rushes
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fall'n, the wind not chill:
Listening ever, but not catching
The customary cry,
'Come buy, come buy,'
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words:
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling;
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, 'O Laura, come;
I hear the fruit call but I dare not look:
You should not loiter longer at this brook:
Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,
Each glowworm winks her spark,
Let us get home before the night grows dark:
For clouds may gather

Though this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us through;
Then if we lost our way what should we do?'

Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry alone,
That goblin cry,
'Come buy our fruits, come buy.'
Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit?
Must she no more such succous pasture find,
Gone deaf and blind?
Her tree of life drooped from the root:
She said not one word in her heart's sore ache;
But peering thro' the dimness, nought discerning,
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way;
So crept to bed, and lay
Silent till Lizzie slept;
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
And gnashed her teeth for baulked desire, and wept
As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
Laura kept watch in vain
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.
She never caught again the goblin cry:
'Come buy, come buy.'—
She never spied the goblin men
Hawking their fruit along the glen;
But when the noon waxed bright
Her hair grew thin and grey;
She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
To swift decay and burn
Her fire away.

One day remembering her kernel-stone
She set it by a wall that faced the south;
Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
Watched for a waxing shoot,
But there came none;

It never saw the sun,
It never felt the trickling moisture run:
While with sunk eyes and faded mouth
She dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees
False waves in desert drouth
With shade of leaf-crowned trees,
And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.

She no more swept the house,
Tended the fowls or cows,
Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
Brought water from the brook:
But sat down listless in the chimney-nook
And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear
To watch her sister's cankerous care
Yet not to share.
She night and morning
Caught the goblin's cry:
'Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy.'—
Beside the brook, along the glen,
She heard the tramp of goblin men,
The voice and stir
Poor Laura could not hear;
Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
But feared to pay too dear.
She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
Who should have been a bride;
But who for joys brides hope to have
Fell sick and died
In her gay prime,
In earliest winter time,
With the first glazing rime,
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.

Till Laura dwindling
Seemed knocking at Death's door:
Then Lizzie weighed no more
Better and worse;
But put a silver penny in her purse,
Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
At twilight, halted by the brook:
And for the first time in her life
Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
When they spied her peeping:
Came towards her hobbling,
Flying, running, leaping,
Puffing and blowing,
Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
Clucking and gobbling,
Mopping and mowing,
Full of airs and graces,
Pulling wry faces,
Demure grimaces,
Cat-like and rat-like,
Ratel- and wombat-like,
Snail-paced in a hurry,
Parrot-voiced and whistler,
Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
Chattering like magpies,
Fluttering like pigeons,
Gliding like fishes,—
Hugged her and kissed her:
Squeezed and caressed her:
Stretched up their dishes,
Panniers, and plates:
'Look at our apples
Russet and dun,
Bob at our cherries,
Bite at our peaches,

Citrons and dates,
Grapes for the asking,
Pears red with basking
Out in the sun,
Plums on their twigs;
Pluck them, and suck them
Pomegranates, figs.'—

'Good folk,' said Lizzie,
Mindful of Jeanie:
'Give me much and many':—
Held out her apron,
Tossed them her penny.
'Nay, take a seat with us,
Honour and eat with us,'
They answered grinning:
'Our feast is but beginning.
Night yet is early,
Warm and dew-pearly,
Wakeful and starry:
Such fruits as these
No man can carry;
Half their bloom would fly,
Half their dew would dry,
Half their flavour would pass by.
Sit down and feast with us,
Be welcome guest with us,
Cheer you and rest with us.'—
'Thank you,' said Lizzie: 'But one waits
At home alone for me:
So without further parleying,
If you will not sell me any
Of your fruits though much and many,
Give me back my silver penny
I tossed you for a fee.'—
They began to scratch their pates,
No longer wagging, purring,
But visibly demurring,

Grunting and snarling.
One called her proud,
Cross-grained, uncivil;
Their tones waxed loud,
Their looks were evil.
Lashing their tails
They trod and hustled her,
Elbowed and jostled her,
Clawed with their nails,
Barking, mewing, hissing, mocking,
Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
Twitched her hair out by the roots,
Stamped upon her tender feet,
Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
Like a lily in a flood,—
Like a rock of blue-veined stone
Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
Like a beacon left alone
In a hoary roaring sea,
Sending up a golden fire,—
Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
White with blossoms honey-sweet
Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
Like a royal virgin town
Topped with gilded dome and spire
Close beleaguered by a fleet
Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
Twenty cannot make him drink.
Though the goblins cuffed and caught her,
Coaxed and fought her,
Bullied and besought her,
Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
Kicked and knocked her,

Mauled and mocked her,
Lizzie uttered not a word;
Would not open lip from lip
Lest they should cram a mouthful in:
But laughed in heart to feel the drip
Of juice that syrupped all her face,
And lodged in dimples of her chin,
And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
At last the evil people
Worn out by her resistance
Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
Along whichever road they took,
Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
Some writhed into the ground,
Some dived into the brook
With ring and ripple,
Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
Some vanished in the distance.

  In a smart, ache, tingle,
Lizzie went her way;
Knew not was it night or day;
Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,
Threaded copse and dingle,
And heard her penny jingle
Bouncing in her purse,—
Its bounce was music to her ear.
She ran and ran
As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged her with gibe or curse
Or something worse:
But not one goblin skurried after,
Nor was she pricked by fear;
The kind heart made her windy-paced
That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
And inward laughter.

She cried 'Laura,' up the garden,
'Did you miss me?
Come and kiss me.
Never mind my bruises,
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
Eat me, drink me, love me;
Laura, make much of me:
For your sake I have braved the glen
And had to do with goblin merchant men.'

Laura started from her chair,
Flung her arms up in the air,
Clutched her hair:
'Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
For my sake the fruit forbidden?
Must your light like mine be hidden,
Your young life like mine be wasted,
Undone in mine undoing
And ruined in my ruin,
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?'—
She clung about her sister,
Kissed and kissed and kissed her:
Tears once again
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
Dropping like rain
After long sultry drouth;
Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,
She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
She loathed the feast:
Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
Rent all her robe, and wrung

Her hands in lamentable haste,
And beat her breast.
Her locks streamed like the torch
Borne by a racer at full speed,
Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
Or like an eagle when she stems the light
Straight toward the sun,
Or like a caged thing freed,
Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her heart,
Met the fires mouldering there
And overbore its lesser flame;
She gorged on bitterness without a name:
Ah! fool, to choose such part
Of soul-consuming care!
Sense failed in the mortal strife:
Like the watch-tower of a town
Which an earthquake shatters down,
Like a lightning-stricken mast,
Like a wind-uprooted tree
Spun about,
Like a foam-topped waterspout
Cast down headlong in the sea,
She fell at last;
Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life?

Life out of death.
That night long Lizzie watched by her,
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
Felt for her breath,
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
With tears and fanning leaves:
But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
And early reapers plodded to the place
Of golden sheaves,

And dew-wet grass
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
And new buds with new day
Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
Laura awoke as from a dream,
Laughed in the innocent old way,
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice;
Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of grey,
Her breath was sweet as May
And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
Afterwards, when both were wives
With children of their own;
Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
Their lives bound up in tender lives;
Laura would call the little ones
And tell them of her early prime,
Those pleasant days long gone
Of not-returning time:
Would talk about the haunted glen,
The wicked, quaint fruit-merchant men,
Their fruits like honey to the throat
But poison in the blood
(Men sell not such in any town):
Would tell them how her sister stood
In deadly peril to do her good,
And win the fiery antidote:
Then joining hands to little hands
Would bid them cling together,
'For there is no friend like a sister
In calm or stormy weather;
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen whilst one stands.'

Christina Rossetti.

Coronach

He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are serest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

Sir Walter Scott.

King Henry VII and the Shipwrights

(A.D. 1487)

Harry, our King in England, from London town is gone,
And comen to Hamull on the Hoke in the Countie of Suthampton.

For there lay the *Mary of the Tower,* his ship of war
so strong,
And he would discover, certaynely, if his shipwrights
did him wrong.

He told not none of his setting forth, not yet where
he would go,
(But only my Lord Arundel) and meanly did he
show,
In an old jerkin and patched hose that no man might
him mark.
With his frieze hood and cloak above, he looked like
any clerk.

He was at Hamull on the Hoke about the hour of
the tide,
And saw the *Mary* haled into dock, the winter to
abide,
With all her tackle and habiliments which are the
King his own; 11
But then ran on his false shipwrights and stripped her
to the bone.

They heaved the main-mast overboard, that was of
a trusty tree,
And they wrote down it was spent and lost by force
of weather at sea.
But they sawen it into planks and shrakes as far as
it might go,
To maken beds for their own wives and little children
also.

There was a knave called Slingawai, he crope beneath
the deck,
Crying: 'Good felawes, come and see! The ship is
nigh a wreck!

For the storm that took our tall main-mast, it blew so fierce and fell,
Alack! it hath taken the kettles and pans, and this brass pott as well!'

With that he set the pott on his head and hied him up the hatch,
While all the shipwrights ran below to find what they might snatch;
All except Bob Brygandyne and he was a yeoman good,
He caught Slingawai round the waist and threw him on to the mud.

'I have taken plank and rope and nail, without the King his leave,
After the custom of Portesmouth, but I will not suffer a thief.
Nay, never lift up thy hand at me—there's no clean hands in the trade—
Steal in measure,' quo' Brygandyne. 'There's measure in all things made!'

'Gramercy, yeoman!' said our King. 'Thy council liketh me.'
And he pulled a whistle out of his neck and whistled whistles three.
Then came my Lord of Arundel pricking across the down,
And behind him the Mayor and Burgesses of merry Suthampton town.

They drew the naughty shipwrights up, with the kettles in their hands,
And bound them round the forecastle to wait the King's commands.

But 'Sith ye have made your beds,' said the King, 'ye needs must lie thereon.
For the sake of your wives and little ones—felawes, get you gone!'

When they had beaten Slingawai, out of his own lips
Our King appointed Brygandyne to be Clerk of all his ships.
Nay, never lift up thy hands to me—there's no clean hands in the trade.
But steal in measure,' said Harry our King. 'There's measure in all things made!'

God speed the 'Mary of the Tower,' the 'Sovereign,' and 'Grace Dieu.'
The 'Sweepstakes' and the 'Mary Fortune,' and the 'Henry of Bristol' too!
All tall ships that sail on the sea, or in our harbours stand,
That they may keep measure with Harry our King and peace in Engeland!

Rudyard Kipling.

The Prisoner of Chillon

I

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffer'd chains and courted death;

That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
  Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
  Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
  And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
  For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound, not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distress'd
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—

A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave inthrals:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave

Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;
  Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
  And then the very rock hath rock'd,
  And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlock'd his chain,

And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh, God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:

But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow;
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender, kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray;
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listen'd, but I could not hear;
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him:—I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived, *I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew;
The last, the sole, the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.

One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and grey;
It was not night—it was day;
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good, no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track;
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity.
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;

For—Heaven forgive that thought; the while
Which made me both to weep and smile—
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,—
Lone as the corse within its shroud,
Lone as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was to liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child—no sire—no kin had I
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,

And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much opprest,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV

It might be months, or years, or days—
I kept no count, I took no note—
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free;
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!

And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell;
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

Lord Byron.

How He Turned Out

When he was young, his parents saw (as parents by the million see)
That Rollo had an intellect of quite unequalled brilliancy;
They started in his training from the hour of his nativity,
And carefully they cultivated every bright proclivity.

At eight, he ate up authors like a literary cannibal,
At nine he mastered Latin as the Latins mastered Hannibal;
At ten he knew astronomy and differential calculus,
And at eleven could dissect the tiniest animalculus.

At twelve, he learned orthometry, and started in to
master all
The different kinds of poetry, the lyric and the
pastoral,
The epic, the dramatic, the descriptive and didactical,
With lessons theoretical and exercises practical.

Music he learned—the old and sweet, the up-to-date
and hideous;
He painted like Apelles and he modelled like a Phidias;
In language he was polyglot, in rhetoric Johnsonian,
In eloquence Websterian, in diction Ciceronian.

At last, with learning that would set an ordinary head
agog,
His education far outshone his most proficient
pedagog;
And so he entered life, with all his lore to lift the lid
for him—
And what do you imagine that his erudition did for
him?

Alas! I fear the truth will shock you, rather than
amuse you all—
To those who've read this sort of verse, the sequel is
unusual.
This man (it's hard on humor, for it breaks the well-known laws of it!)
Was happier for his learning, and a great success because of it!

Edwin Meade Robinson.

NOTES AND QUESTIONS

PART I

THE BALLAD

The ballad has been defined as a story told in song. Frequently, however, especially in the older ballads, the story is suggested rather than told. The main characteristics of this kind of poetry are the refrain and the repetitions of words, phrases, and lines. The story is rapidly told, emphasis being laid on the main incidents, while the transitional parts are frequently omitted altogether. Very often the course of events is suggested through dialogue, in which case the usual 'he said,' 'she replied,' etc., are constantly omitted. This gives many of the ballads a dramatic effect. Some of these peculiarities are explained by the origin and growth of ballad poetry. Many critics think that ballads originated in the very early ages amongst the simple, unlettered folk, one of whose amusements was the dance-song, probably under the direction of one of their own number. As they danced they sang about some event which had happened in their locality or which had been reported to them. Other critics believe that ballads were made and sung in the first instance by travelling minstrels. However the ballads originated, they were certainly transmitted by the 'people,' that is, when once learned, they were passed along orally from one generation to another, and this process went on for centuries. Many old people are still living who can recall whole ballads, or snatches of ballads, which were sung to them in childhood—people who have never seen a ballad in print. If we look upon the ballad as the peculiar property of the simple, unlearned folk, we can understand, for example, why ballads have so much repetition. The refrain, again, points unmistakably to the time when ballads were sung by a throng. Further, many ballads found in widely separated parts of the world tell the same story while they differ from one another in details. This fact is easily accounted for by considering that in the process of transmission changes would be introduced owing to deficiencies of memory, or the desire on the part of the transmitter to change parts of the story to suit local taste or conditions.

Ballads are not all of the same age. The older ones, *Lord Randal,* for instance, are simpler in plot, more vague as to time and place, and less decorated with poetic ornament than those of later date. Their chief charm lies in their simplicity and directness. Later ballads tend to be longer, more attention being paid to the introduction, the transitions, and, generally speaking, to poetic decorations of the story. When, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the ballads had been collected and were known to the reading public, the form was imitated by poets like Scott, Coleridge, and Rossetti. Some of these poets tried to adhere more or less closely to the style and form of the traditional ballad, while others used the ballad form quite freely. As a consequence the modern ballad is little more than a stanzaic narrative poem of moderate length.

Page 1. LORD RANDAL. This is obviously a very old ballad, though it was not written down until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In another version the hero is called Lord Donald, and in a third, 'My bonnie wee croodlin dow.'

11. eels, on account of their similarity to snakes, have an unsavoury reputation in folk-lore.
25. Here begins 'the last will and testament,' a very common feature in medieval poetry.

1. What is the most striking thing about the way the story of *Lord Randal* is told? 2. How does the 'last will and testament' become an important part of the story? 3. Write out in your own words a story which contains the chief elements of the story told in the ballad. 4. How would you dramatize this ballad? (Further note: A book called *Dramatized Ballads*, by Alice M. G. White and Janet E. Tobitt, illustrated by Barbara Danielson, has been issued (1937) by E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

Page 2. SIR PATRICK SPENS. This ballad, first printed in 1765, was taken down from recitation in Scotland. Sir Patrick is not known in history nor can his expedition be identified. It has been suggested that the basis of the story is an event in Scottish history. In 1281, Margaret, daughter of Alexander III of Scotland, was married to the King of Norway. Many of the Scottish nobles who conducted her to her husband were drowned on the voyage home. Margaret's daughter, the Maid of Norway, fell heir to the Scottish crown in 1286. A match was proposed between this infant maiden and the eldest son of Edward I of England. A deputation was sent to Norway in 1290 to bring the princess back, but she died on landing in Orkney.

1. Dumferling: Dumfermline, on the Firth of Forth. One of the early residences of the Kings of Scotland.
9. braid: broad, full.
29. laith: loth.
30. To weet, etc.: To wet their cork-heeled shoes.
32. aboone: above.
41. Aberdour: either one of two villages on the east coast of Scotland.

1. Count the accents in the first stanza of this poem and compare the metre or the rhythm with that of *Lord Randal*. 2.

What is the difference in method of telling the story as compared with the previous one? 3. What particular effect do you find in l. 41?

Page 4. THE BRAES O' YARROW. This is an example of a 'composite' ballad, that is, one made up of parts of various versions of the same ballad none of which seems to tell the story quite satisfactorily to the modern reader. William Allingham is the author of the 'composition' (1864). The story of a lover or a husband treacherously slain by the relatives of the lady in the case, because they resent her union with the victim is a common one in ballads.

Braes: steep banks.
2. lawing: reckoning.
3. dawing: dawning.
10. marrow: mate; here, husband.
12. dowie: doleful.
26. thorough: through (a shorter form of the same word)
43. leafu': lawful.
50. binna: be not.
53. read: interpret.

1. How much information about the situation is given in the first four stanzas? 2. How is this information conveyed? 3 Note the transition in stanza five and contrast it with the lack of transitions in the first four. Pick out other instances in the poem. 4. What are we told in the stanza beginning at l. 65 that helps to explain the story? 5. Are there any indications that the ballad is intended for singing? 6. Are there any repetitions?

Page 5. BRIGNALL BANKS. Here Scott is imitating the not uncommon kind of ballad in which the fate of one of the characters is dependent on the guessing of a riddle. The action is supposed to take place in the northern part of Yorkshire—Brignall and Dalton being small places near the river Greta, a tributary of the Tees.

17. read: interpret, guess. So in the next two stanzas.
37. brand: sword; musketoon: heavy musket of seventeenth century.
40. tuck: sound, beat.

1. Point out as many similarities as you can between this poem and the three preceding ballads. 2. If you can get a copy read *The Nut Brown Maid,* one of the oldest printed poems in English.

Page 7. THE FEUD was first published in *Poems, Old and New* (1900).

1. Sansard: name and place are purely imaginary.

1. Compare the method of telling this story with the method of the previous selections. 2. Note the succession of rhymes in

ll. 1, 3, 4, and 5 of each stanza. Do you know of any other instances of this rhyme scheme? Glance at *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (page 141). Note that the extra lines give a chance for further description—poetic embellishment—which is not provided in the ordinary ballad stanza.

Page 9. FLANNAN ISLE. The Flannan Islands, often called the Seven Hunters, make a lonely group on the outer fringe of the Hebrides. The poem is founded on an actual occurrence at this place in recent years.

1-4. The opening stanza gives the exact report of the 'passing ship' (l. 5).

26. guillemot (pron. gĭl-e-mŏt, *g* hard as in 'get'): clumsy swimming bird. shag: species of cormorant.

1. How does this poem differ from the old ballads in its method of telling the story? 2. In what way or ways is it similar? 3. Pick out words, phrases, and names of objects that help to give the effect of 'spookiness.' 4. Is there any suggestion thrown out as to what may have become of the three keepers?

Page 12. THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN.

25. Mavrone: Irish interjection—'my grief,' about equivalent to 'alas!'

In what respects is this poem like the ballad?

Page 14. MIA CARLOTTA.

Mia: Italian, my (pron. meea).

1. Giuseppe: three syllables (pron. jü-sĕp-pĕ), Joseph.

Page 14. THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN.

1. How much do you gather about the story in the first ten lines? 2. Who is the other speaker in the imagined conversation (ll. 19-24)? 3. Where does Warren give the first sign of relenting: 4. Does the introduction of Harold Wilson (ll. 59-88) add anything (*a*) to the story, (*b*) to our knowledge of the character of Silas, (*c*) does it affect our feeling for him? Answer the same questions as regards the discussion of 'home' and Silas's brother (ll. 112-47). 5. What concessions does Mary gradually wring from Warren about Silas? 6. Why are four lines (161-4) given over to the cloud and the moon? 7. How is the 'story' told?

Page 20. THE PLAINT OF THE CAMEL.

3. noodles: simple creatures.

1. Is there anything especially noticeable in the rhymes of this poem? 2. What is the effect of the peculiar rhyme in ll. 26-7? 3. In what mood does the Camel appear to speak?

Page 21. THE FLUTE.

58. outby: a northern dialect word meaning 'a little way out.'

1. What difference is there between the poet's method of telling the story here and that of *The Death of the Hired Man?* 2. What indications are there in the passage (ll. 53-78) that it is the old man's speech which the poet is reporting? 3. What other passages are of the same kind? 4. What do the dots at ll. 78, 102, 104 suggest? 5. What caused the vision which appeared at l. 171? 6. Which mood prevails at the end—sadness for the old man, or gratefulness that his last days were made somewhat more cheerful?

Page 28. TO DAFFODILS.

8. even-song: evening service of the church.
16. hours: the word suggests the brevity of the flower's life.

Page 29. THE DAFFODILS.

1. Compare the mood of Herrick's poem with that of Wordsworth's *To Daffodils.* 2. Pick out in each poem words, phrases, images, etc., that suggest or carry out the particular mood of the poet.

Page 30. THE SONG OF THE SKI.

26. etching: picture reproduced by engraving a metal plate.
32. bacchanal: a votary of Bacchus, god of wine. sybarite: one who delights in luxuries.
43. rune: a letter of the ancient Scandinavian alphabet; here: a tune. In Finnish a rune is part of a poem.

1. Point out a few phrases, lines, or images which you think are particularly striking. 2. Trace the various phases of the ski-jump. 3. What is the effect of the contrast which begins at l. 44? 4. What is the mood of the poem?

Page 32. THE RAVEN. In a treatise on this poem Poe calls the raven a 'personification of mournful Remembrance.'

10. surcease: cessation (archaic)
41. Pallas: Minerva, goddess of learning.
47. Plutonian shore: the shore of Death.
82. nepenthe: a drug which causes forgetfulness of grief.
89. Is there . . . balm in Gilead? Is there any healing for me? (Quoted from Jeremiah viii. 22.) A famous medicinal balm came from Gilead.
93. Aidenn: Paradise. The word is slightly changed from the Arabic form of Eden.

1. What is the mood of the poem? 2. Pick out words, phrases, pictures which are associated with or help to preserve that mood. 3. Note how the words which rhyme with 'more' running throughout help to give unity to the poem. 4. Note any other peculiarities of the rhyme scheme.

Page 38. PUTTING WINTER TO BED.

16. callow: unfledged, raw, or crude (as belonging to a youth).

27. Nordic: a term applied to the Scandinavians and other Germanic people of northern Europe.
35. nether sign: a fantastic term signifying a low punch.
36. counted out: lay on the ground while ten seconds were counted; he was declared 'knocked out.'
53. Narcotic: such as one hears when under the influence of a drug.
71. parlous: dangerous, perilous (obsolete).
77. anodyne: something that assuages pain.
113. Trout-lilies: another name for the dog-tooth violet.

1. Pick out words, phrases, images, etc., that are appropriate to the respective months and seasons. 2. What are some of the signs of April's 'ancient sorcery' and 'wild-wood lore'? 3. With what sport are many of the words in ll. 25-36 connected? 4. Name the 'seven sisters' referred to in l. 141.

Page 43. A CONSECRATION. This poem stands at the beginning of Masefield's *Collected Poems* (1923).

1. periwigged: wearing a wig—a sign of ceremonial greatness.
2. laurelled: The laurel wreath in Ancient Greece was the prize of victory at the national games (also prize at the modern Olympic games).
3. scorned and rejected suggest the wording of Isaiah iii. 3. the men hemmed, etc., should probably be taken with the idea of the next stanza.
4. tattered battalion: not a crack regiment on parade.
8. cock-horse: astride, mounted.
9. Carried the koppie: Took the hill by storm. Koppie or kopje is Dutch for a small hill. The Boer War is evidently in the poet's mind.
10. ranker: man in the ranks; private.
13. clout: cloth around his neck as stokers are often pictured.
14. chantyman: sailor singing a song (chanty) as he heaves up the anchor at the ship's tackle (halliards).
19. Theirs: referring to 'others,' l. 16.
20. mould: earth.

1. What picture is called to mind by the first line? 2. Pick out one or two phrases where the poet is sarcastic about the so-called great ones. 3. Mark and count the stresses in the lines, and note the rhyme scheme. 4. Do you notice any other poetic device in the poem?

Page 44. CARGOES.

1. Quinquireme: ancient galley having five benches or rows of oars on each side. Nineveh: capital of Assyria, noted in old times for its magnificence. Ophir: a region famous for its gold (see 1 Kings ix. 28).
6. galleon: large ship of war; term especially associated with the Spanish Armada.

10. moidores: a Portuguese gold coin.
11. coaster: a vessel employed in the coastal trade.

1. Note as many points of contrast as you can between the first two stanzas and the last. 2. Do you suppose each stanza gives a typical example of the vessels of the various countries? 3. Say to yourself the nursery rhyme *Sing a Song of Sixpence* and see whether you detect any similarity to the rhythm of *Cargoes*. Compare *Sherwood* (page 139). 4. How far does *Cargoes* measure up to the promise given in *A Consecration?*

Page 45. CHRISTMAS AT SEA. Published in *Ballads*, January 1891.

9. South Head and the North: there are two points so named within a short distance of one another at the entrance to Sydney Harbour, Australia, which Stevenson had visited in 1890. That the imagery and names are borrowed from the Australian port is made almost certain by a passage in J. A. Steuart's *Robert Louis Stevenson*, vol. ii, p. 175. The scene of the poem, of course, belongs to the northern hemisphere.
33. high sea-light: elevated light on shore to guide ships into harbour.
37. her bearings: her proper course.
38. smelt: nosed her way. There is a suggestion that the ship herself sensed the danger she was in.

1. From what source are many of the words and images of the poem derived? 2. What contrast do you notice between, say, the passage beginning at l. 25 and the first four stanzas? 3. What image or picture do the words 'the chimneys volley'd out' (l. 19) call to your mind?

Page 47. THE 'REVENGE.' A 'Report' of the fight celebrated in this poem was written by Sir Walter Raleigh in the same year as the event, 1591. Tennyson follows in the main Raleigh's account.

1. Azores: a group of islands lying off the north-west coast of Africa. The English fleet had come out to intercept a Spanish convoy from the West Indies. Grenville: vice-admiral of the fleet.
4. Howard: admiral of the fleet.
7. ships of the line: term applied to warships of not less than three tiers of guns.
21. thumbscrew and the stake: instruments of torture used by the Inquisition.
30. Seville: in the south of Spain. Until 1563 it was the capital of the country.

1. What is the difference between this battle poem and the poems of the World War? 2. Which of the two men, Howard or Grenville, acted with greater intelligence? 3. What was Grenville's idea of the fight as expressed in ll. 83-90? Compare what he says here with what he gives as the reason of his remain-

ing (ll. 10-13). 4. Do you notice any internal rhymes (within the lines)? 5. What poetic effect do you note at ll. 39, 41, 55? 6. What is the effect of the repetition in stanza ix? 7. What do the sweeping lines of the last stanza seem to imitate or suggest?

Page 53. The Sea-King's Burial. 'The old Norse kings, when about to die, had their body laid into a ship; the ship sent forth with sails set, and slow fire burning in it, that, once out at sea, it might blaze up in flame, and in such manner bury worthily the old hero, at once in the sky and in the ocean' (Carlyle: *Heroes and Hero Worship*).

17. King Balder: not to be confused with the god Balder.
38. Vikingr Norse form of the plural, Vikings.
39. Valhalla: the Palace of the Dead, where the souls of heroes slain in battle enjoyed immortality. The word means 'the hall of the slain.'
43. Odin or Woden, the supreme god of Teutonic tribes.
189. Thor: the god of thunder in Scandinavian mythology.
223. requiems: in the Roman Catholic Church a requiem is a service for the dead.

1. What is the spirit of this funeral piece? 2. Compare it with any other poem of death in the book (e.g. the ballads) and explain the difference of mood.

Page 60. Forty Singing Seamen.

Prester John: a mysterious character who in the Middle Ages was supposed to rule over a vast realm in the interior of Asia in the double capacity of King and Christian priest.
1. Mogadore: the chief seaport of Morocco on the Atlantic.
3. Polyphemus: chief of a fabled race of one-eyed monsters. Ulysses (l. 7) and his companions, having been wrecked on Polyphemus's island while returning from Troy, were imprisoned by him. Ulysses succeeded finally in making the monster drunk and blinding him, thus rendering possible the escape of the wanderers.
10. vinous: due to wine.
22. which . . . they. This story is supposed to be told by one of the 'simple seamen.' bay: a wreath of bayleaves was the emblem of a conqueror or a poet.
42. Beachy Head: a cape on the Sussex coast, England, about 600 feet high.
59. Phoenix: a fabulous bird, the only one of its kind, which, after living in the Arabian desert for six centuries, burnt itself on a funeral pyre and rose from its own ashes with renewed youth to live through another cycle.

1. Read the poem aloud. How many accents to the line? Can you read it in such a way as to make four? Note the heavy stresses at the end of l. 2 (and where else?). 2. Do you note any

special rhyme effects? 3. Comment on the chorus as a repetition of the preceding line. 4. Do you think the form is suitable for the situation? Why?

Page 65. THE CHILD AND THE MARINER.

3. The lamb that Jesus petted when a child. Many such stories of the childhood of Jesus are told in the Apocryphal books of the New Testament—though not the particular one alluded to here. The child Jesus with a lamb is sometimes seen in old pictures, e.g. 'St. Anne with the Virgin and Child,' by Leonardo da Vinci.

31. three bottled ships: three models of ships in bottles. In the days of sailing ships sailors used to amuse themselves by making models of ships and inserting them into ordinary bottles. The masts, rigging, etc., were attached to the hull by hinges, and after the model had been placed in the bottle, the masts were raised by strings. These models are now becoming museum pieces.

41. Twm Barlum's hill: an obscure allusion, perhaps to Celtic folk-lore such as one finds in the *Mabinogion*. *Twm pronounced like 'tomb.'*

50. Phoenicians: inhabitants of ancient Phoenicia, a country which extended along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They were celebrated for their navigation and for the wealth of the mines which were the chief object of their seafaring.

69. Cingalese: people of Ceylon.

93. Cape Horn: southernmost point of S. America, notorious for its storms.

100. Neptune: Roman god of the sea.

112. Lazarus: see John xi.

115. Argostoli: capital of Cephalonia, one of the Ionian islands. Here a stream flows *from* the sea, which is used to drive mills.

120. Martinique: an island with several volcanoes in the Caribbean sea; one of the West Indies.

123. only half was his: i.e. only half of the 'fire' was due to the sun's rays.

146. Bosphorus: strait between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara.

1. What contrast does the poet use to bring out the shiftlessness of the mariner? 2. Pick out a few words and phrases in the descriptions that emphasize the character of the child and of the mariner. 3. From what points of view do we see the mariner? 4. What qualities or peculiarities of the mariner appeal to the child? 5. What image comes to your mind as you read ll. 126-7? 6. Generally what is the source of the images in the poem? 7. What words or phrases would indicate that the

sailor is being described by the admiring boy? 8. Give an example or two where truth and fiction are mixed in the sailor's yarns. 9. What famous poem records the same kind of incident as that mentioned in ll. 131-2? 10. Do you suppose the sailor knew the poem? 11. What is the effect of the last two lines? 12. Whose opinion do you agree with?

Page 70. SEUMAS BEG. This is the name of a little Irish boy through whose eyes the world is seen in Stephens's 'Adventures of Seumas Beg,' a group of poems under the general title of *The Rocky Road to Dublin.*

8. marling-spike: sailor pronunciation for marline(lin)-spike, a tapering iron pin used in separating the strands of a rope in splicing.

1. What signs are there that a boy is telling the story?

Page 70. THE PASSING OF ARTHUR (1869) forms the closing scene of Tennyson's epic, *Idylls of the King.* The twelve parts which together form the epic are a poetic rendering of the most significant episodes of Sir Thomas Malory's prose *Morte d' Arthur* (1469). The first of the series, *The Coming of Arthur,* introduces King Arthur paramount in Britain, wedded to Guinevere, and surrounded by his 'Knights of the Round Table,' an order established by the king to redress the wrongs of the world. The following ten poems, 'The Round Table,' describe the adventures of his chief knights. The allegory which connects the whole is 'the conflict continually maintained between the spirit and the flesh.' The mutual love of Lancelot and Guinevere ultimately prevails over their loyalty to the king; many of the knights prove untrue to their vows and range themselves under the standard of Modred, Arthur's treacherous nephew, who, leagued with Guinevere, tries to usurp the throne. Thi was dissolved.

> 'The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
> Whereof the world holds record.'

6. march to westward. After settling with Lancelot King Arthur was advancing against Modred, who was in retreat toward Lyonnesse.

30. Gawain had been slain in the struggle against Lancelot. The Gawain of the old romances is a much nobler type of man than the Gawain of the *Idylls.*

69. heathen. After having made himself master of Britain, by driving the heathen kings beyond the Roman wall, Arthur defied the power of Rome herself (ii. 68, 133). (See *The Coming of Arthur.*)

77. Almesbury. Queen Guinevere, a penitent woman, had sought refuge at the Abbey of Almesbury, and there she had been visited by the king. (See *Guinevere.*)

81. Lyonnesse. According to old tradition, the Scilly Isles were at one time connected with the mainland. The

connecting land, now covered with water, was known as Lyonnesse.

118. some one deathbed. All available texts have this reading. This reading *lone* for *one* has been suggested.

148. and so: and if it be that.

157. sware my vows: swore to be true to the vows imposed by Arthur when he made them his knights. (See *The Coming of Arthur*, 259-68.)

168. Excalibur: Arthur's miraculous sword, given to him by the Lady of the Lake. (See *The Coming of Arthur*.)

170. The part of the poem from here to l. 439 was published under the title, *Morte d' Arthur*.

189. Camelot: the legendary seat of Arthur's court; variously identified with Caerleon (Wales), Carlisle, Glastonbury, Winchester, etc.

191. Merlin: the magician of the court.

199. samite: dress fabric of silk sometimes interwoven with gold.

248. lief and dear: synonymous in this phrase.

278. conceit: clever idea. He has reasoned so artfully that he has blinded himself to the rightful course of action.

366. Three Queens. At the Coronation of Arthur (see *The Coming of Arthur*, 256 ff.), three queens

> '. . . stood in silence near his throne . . .
> . . . who will help him at his need.'

383. greaves and cuisses (pron. kwisses): armour for shins and thighs respectively.

401. Elders. See the story of the Wise Men of the East, Matthew ii. 7-12.

427. Avilion: generally associated with Glastonbury in Somersetshire, though it seems there is no valley near that town. Its locality is as vague as that of Camelot.

451. He comes again. Compare the tradition of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who was drowned during the Third Crusade. It was said that he was but hiding and would return in the hour of need to save the empire he had ruled.

1. What sort of atmosphere does Arthur's dream create? In what mood does it put the reader? 2. What do the mist and confusion of the battle (ll. 93-112) seem to symbolize? 3. In what way does Bedivere's temptation suggest how the Round Table was dissolved? 4. Are the reasons which Bedivere gives in ll. 256-77 the true ones? 5. Pick out all the cases of repetition you can find. Do they suggest any particular effect or any other forms of poetry? 6. At ll. 353 ff. what words does the poet use to suggest by their sound, the ruggedness of the way? Contrast ll. 359-60. 7. How many stresses are there in each line of the poem? What is the form of *The Passing* called?

Compare, e.g., *The Prisoner of Chillon* (page 247). Which form seems more suited for rapid narration? What form does Scott use in *The Lady of the Lake?*

Page 84. MINIVER CHEEVY.

11. Thebes: a city of ancient Greece famous in poetry; Camelot: the seat of King Arthur's court.
12. Priam: King of Troy at the time of the capture by the Greeks.
15. on the town: (colloq.) supported as a pauper by town funds, i.e. Romance is 'down at heels' in these days. One meaning of the phrase is 'supporting oneself by thieving.'
17. Medici (pron. mê-dĭ-chē): an illustrious Florentine family which flourished from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, noted for their wealth, power, and patronage of the Arts, and also for the wickedness of some of the members.

1. Judging by the general sense of the poem does 'child of scorn' mean 'scornful' or 'scorned'? 2. What is the poet's attitude towards Miniver? 3. What is the defect in the 'child of scorn'? 4. What were some of the objects of his scorn?

Page 85. GOD'S JUDGEMENT ON A WICKED BISHOP. Southey follows rather closely an old tradition about Hatto, Archbishop of Mainz, in the tenth century. The island and tower where he tried to save himself are still pointed out in the Rhine below Bingen.

63. told: numbered.

1. Point out three circumstances which make the story particularly shocking. 2. Is this story as it is told very horrifying? 3. What relieves the grimness of the massacre and the conclusion? 4. What is the effect of the succession of rhymes in stanza two, and again in the second last stanza?

Page 88. HEM AND HAW.

5. fogey: the usual expression is 'old fogey,' i.e. an old-fashioned fellow.
8. yammered: whimpered loudly; went at it blind: went at it blindly, unintelligently.

1. What is the everyday expression from which the poet has created these two personalities? 2. How do they fit the expression? 3. Why is Hem's voice said to be 'quavering'? 4. Why is the law mentioned particularly (l. 26)?

Page 89. THE MOUSE THAT GNAWED THE OAK-TREE DOWN.

10. coteries: select social circles.

1. Does the poet speak with approval or disapproval of the mouse? 2. What were the chief qualities of the mouse? 3. What is the effect of the last line?

Page 89. Sam's Three Wishes.

5. **I knows on**: I know of. Sam is an English rustic, who says *ax* for *ask* and *us* for *we*.
7. **nobbut inside 'un**: nobody inside it. Usually *nobbut*—none but.
23. **wist**: knowest.
25. **rush**: rush light, rude candle with rush for wick.
38. **pixy-pears**: fairy pears.
40. **fairy-knowes**: knolls or rings made by fairies.
42. **Potencies**: powers.
50. **crany**: cranium, head.
52. **Michaelmas Day**: 29th September, when a goose is the traditional fare.
92. **nowt**: naught, nothing.
124. **sooth**: soft, smooth (poetical word).
133. **glour**: glower, stare.
170. **sops-in-wine**: clove-pink or gillyflower.
195. **gooming**: looking intently.
206. **rattle**: plant with rattling seed.
218. **Christian**: human being.
227. **stave**: sing out.

1. Give two or three good reasons why Sam chose as he did. 2. What or who is the mouse at l. 215? 3. Suggest how the dots at l. 224 might be filled out. 4. What suggestion is made in the last two lines? (Does the fact that Sam is a poor farmer help in answering this question?)

Page 96. The Snare.

1. Do you find any special effect in the repetition of lines? 2. What is the effect of the last two lines? 3. What is the mood of the poem?

Page 97. The Birds of Killingworth: the Poet's tale in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*.

4. **Saxon Cædmon** (pron. Kăd-mon): the earliest of the known Anglo-Saxon poets, reputed author of paraphrases of the Bible story (*Genesis, Exodus, Daniel*, etc.)
   Blitheheart King: God. ('Bliðheort cyning.' 'blithe' or 'kind-hearted King,' is an epithet applied to God in Cædmon's *Genesis*, l. 192.)
12. **Holy Writ**: see Matthew x. 29; Psalm lxxxiv. 3. etc.
15. **raven's cry**: see Psalm cxlvii. 9.
17. **Sound**: Long Island Sound, between Long Island (N.Y.) and the mainland (Connecticut). Killingworth (l. 25) is about six miles inland.
30. **Cassandra**: daughter of Priam and Hecuba. She was given the power of prophecy, but with the reservation that her prophecies should not be believed. In vain, therefore, she foretold the destruction of Troy.

52. Edwards: Jonathan Edwards (1703-58) was an American divine, author of *Freedom of the Will* (1754).
54. Adirondac: The Adirondacks are a beautiful range of mountains in the north of New York state.
67. bombazine: dress material, much used in mourning.
89. Plato: Greek philosopher (b. 427 B.C.). His banishing the poets refers to the *Republic,* Book iii.
93. Troubadours: travelling minstrels (especially in France) in the Middle Ages.
96. David . . . Saul: see 1 Samuel xvi. 23.
124. madrigals: unaccompanied part-songs for several voices. Madrigal often means a short love poem.
138. windrows: hay raked into long rows for the purpose of bunching into haycocks.
157-8. These lines may be thus paraphrased: 'Or Death, which seems to us darkness, but is, as much as life, a "gleam of God's omnipotence," shining though it does in the other world.'
172. crowned . . . applause: the school-children by their applause metaphorically placed upon his brow the wreath of victory.
184. St. Bartholomew: the reference is to the massacre of the Huguenots which began in Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day, 24th August 1572, and spread through the provinces of France during the succeeding weeks.
193. Herod: see Matthew ii. 16-19.
212. illumined pages: the splendours of autumn are compared to the beautifully coloured designs with which the medieval monks adorned the pages of the manuscripts they made or copied. Doomsday book: the allusion is, of course, to the Domesday Book of William the Conqueror, so called because in the eyes of the people it was like the book which, they imagined, would be produced on the Day of Judgment. (A.-S. *dōm.* judgment.)
229. canticles: little songs or hymns, especially those in the Prayer Book.

1. What images do you get from ll. 6, 131-2? 2. Has the Preceptor's address (ll. 89-160) any other effect than simply being part of the story? 3. Is there any prophecy in 'stingy harvest' (l. 135)? 4. Note the description and diction of the stanza beginning l. 209. What do you find in it appropriate to the situation? 5. Is the love-story necessary to the story? What effect has it on the narrative?

Page 104. THE LAST ANTELOPE.

6. saddle-back: a hill having a concave outline at the top.
24. pronghorn: American antelope native of the plains near the Rocky Mountains.

1. What emotion is aroused by the poem? 2. Why does the poet use repetition of words and phrases? 3. What effect does he gain by placing ll. 21-2 where he does?

Page 105. ROBINSON CRUSOE'S STORY.

30. morocco: leather usually prepared from goat-skin.

1. Point out as many cases as you can where this 'nonsense verse' makes utter nonsense. 2. Point out a particular case where the rhyme makes the sense more ridiculous.

Page 107. KING ROBERT OF SICILY: the Sicilian's tale in *Tales of a Wayside Inn.* It is difficult and indeed impossible to identify the hero of this romance. The sinner who becomes a saint is a frequent subject for poetry, and especially was this the case in the Middle Ages. The fifty-ninth chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum* (prose) contains a history of the Emperor Jovinian nearly identical with the present story. Again, the romance of *Robert the Devil* obviously belongs to the same family as the story here told by Longfellow. Robert the Devil is probably Robert of Normandy, son of William the Conqueror, who, after a life of dissipation, mortgaged his dukedom of Normandy to go on the First Crusade, and thereby obtained a reputation for sanctity. Sicily was conquered by the Normans and was ruled by them from A.D. 1072 to 1194. Thus a Norman duke might easily be confused in popular story with a Sicilian king, especially as several of the Norman kings of Sicily were named Robert. But it is unnecessary, as it is impossible, to establish the identity of the persons. It was Pope Urban II who preached the First Crusade and who persuaded Robert of Normandy to go to the Holy Land, and that may account for a Pope Urbane (l. 1) being made a brother of the King of Sicily in the story; but there is no record of any Valmond, Emperor of Germany (Allemaine, l. 2).

5. St. John's eve: more probably the eve of the festival of St. John the Evangelist, 27th December, than that of St. John the Baptist, 24th June. vespers: evensong.

6. Magnificat: Hymn of the Virgin Mary in the church service, so named from the opening word (see Luke i, 46-55).

9. Deposuit, etc. These Latin words are translated in ll. 14-15.

34. stalls: enclosed seats in the chancel or choir of a church reserved for clergymen.

56. seneschal: steward; a high official in the household of the medieval knight or king.

82. Jester: a professional fool who acted as entertainer at the medieval court. The bells, cape, and ape (ll. 83-4) or monkey were part of the usual equipment of the jester.

106. Saturnian reign: mythical age of peace and happiness when Saturn, not Jupiter, was king of heaven.
110. Enceladus: one of the giants who made war on the gods. He was killed by Zeus and buried under Mount Etna. The line signifies that Mount Etna was quiet and that consequently the islanders had no fear of volcanic activity.
132. Holy Thursday: the day before Good Friday.
150. Saint Peter's square: in front of St. Peter's palace, the residence of the Popes.
154. He entertained, etc.: alluding to Hebrews xiii. 2.

1. Trace the varying moods of King Robert throughout the poem. 2. Indicate the progress of the story by dividing it into suitable parts. 3. Mark and count the stresses in the lines. Note the rhyme scheme. Do you know any other poem in this form? Contrast *The Passing of Arthur*. Are any of the lines of *King Robert* longer or shorter than the ordinary lines of the poem? If you find any say whether you think the poet has gained any effect by the variation.

Page 113. LINCOLN. Abraham Lincoln (1809-65) was President of the United States from 1861 to 1865, during the momentous period of the American Civil War. He was assassinated at a theatre.

This is the first section of a poem of sixty-four lines in honour of the dead Lincoln. These opening lines are a simile giving the poet's idea of Lincoln's relation to the nation.

Page 114. O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN! is another poem on the same subject as the preceding one, but with a different image or simile.

1. Point out the differences in the similes in the two poems. 2. Are there any likenesses in the two? 3. Each implies a storm. What storm? 4. Which poem gives the strongest impression of personal loss? 5. How in each poem is the idea of 'father' brought out? 6. What is the 'mad stray bolt' of the first poem? 7. What is 'the prize we sought' in the second?

Page 115. MR. FLOOD'S PARTY.

8. Tilbury Town. In Robinson's poems this is Gardiner, Maine, where the poet grew up.
20. Roland's ghost. Roland, nephew of Charlemagne and hero of the famous Old French epic *The Song of Roland*, is killed by treachery; but before his death he blows his ivory horn, which his uncle hears at a distance of thirty miles, and in answer to which he returns to avenge his nephew's death.
23. dead. The old friends of Eben, now departed, return the toast in a 'phantom salutation.'

47. Secure: in the older sense of 'free from care,' or else the feeling of security and the 'two moons' had a common source.

1. Why does Eben Flood address himself? 2. What illusion is aided by the use of 'Mr.'? 3. What elements (phrases, situation, character, etc.) in the poem suggest pathos?

Page 116. THE PATRIOT.

1. What is implied in the last half of l. 10? 2. What do you gather from ll. 19-20? 3. What is the reference in the word 'so' (l. 30)? 4. Sketch the situation or story as you gather it from this poem. 5. How is the story told? 6. Name any other poems which resemble this one.

Page 118. THE ITALIAN IN ENGLAND (1845).

8. Charles. If this name applies to a particular person—not a necessary supposition for the understanding of the poem—it may refer to Charles Albert, an Italian prince, afterwards King of Sardinia, who had been sympathetic with revolutionary principles. Desire to succeed to the throne, however, caused him to adhere to Austria, which at that time dominated Italy.

19. Metternich, the Austrian statesman, was the bitterest enemy of Italian freedom: our friend, spoken ironically.

41. crypt: a vault under a church used for burial; here a place of concealment.

75. Duomo: (Italian) cathedral.

76. Tenebrae: a service in the Roman Catholic Church in which candles are extinguished one after another (L. *tenebrae*, darkness).

126. die slow of a broken heart. Charles Albert, having abdicated the crown in favour of his son, Victor Emmanuel, and retired to Portugal, died in 1849, 'broken-hearted and misunderstood.' (Cf. note on 'Charles,' l. 8, above.)

1. What indications are there of the speaker's former position in Italy? 2. How much do we know of 'Charles'? 3. What is implied as to the situation in the 'That' which begins the story? (What seems to have preceded?) 4. What other poems in the book are like this one in form? 5. Is the speaker's patriotism based on love of Italy or hatred of Austria?

Page 122. THE GLOVE AND THE LIONS. The incident related in the poem occurs at the court of Francis I of France.

1. What is the fitness of the word 'crowning' in l. 5? 2. What was the lady's motive in throwing the glove? 3. Mark and count the stresses in the line. Name any other poem you know with this kind of metre. 4. Do you notice any peculiarities in the rhyme scheme?

Page 124. THE GLOVE.

Peter Ronsard loquitur: Peter Ronsard speaks. Pierre Ronsard was the leader of a group who sought to Latinize French poetry—a mere youth at the death of Francis I.

7. aghast I 'm. Note all through the poem the ingenious rhymes, not a sign of seriousness in poetry.
12. Naso: the cognomen of Ovid, famous for his love poetry.
14. Ixions: people who make love to clouds.
25. Sir De Lorge. Browning, of course, knows that in English *Sir* cannot immediately precede a surname.
45. Clement Marot: a writer of light verse who was a good deal older than Ronsard.
50. Illum, etc. That lion of the tribe of Judah.
59. For who knew, etc.: the lion's thoughts, which run, 'Who knows what the noise means and whether the way isn't clear and I am at last free?'
80. The visitor would become 'the lion's meat.'
82. Marignan: victory of the French over the Swiss, 1515.
89. nonchalance: properly accented on first syllable.
150. until time should define, etc.: until an unsought occasion should prove De Lorge's sincerity—the only proper way out of the difficulty. Her 'vanity' was shown in making an artificial occasion.
162. Nemean: the most terrible sort of lion, such as Hercules overcame.

1. What was the lady's purpose (*a*) in the eyes of the court, (*b*) in her own mind? Which do you agree with? 2. In what ways is Browning's version enlarged (embellished) as compared with the preceding version? 3. Compare the descriptions of the lions in the arena and say which poem presents the more dangerous situation for De Lorge. 4. What is Browning apparently more interested in than simply telling the story? 5. Note the rhymes and say what effect you think they produce.

PART II

Page 131. EDWARD. This poem, regarded as one of the best specimens of the 'popular' ballad, has an exact counterpart in Swedish, Danish, and Finnish.

4. gang: go.
5. gude: good.
8. nae mair: no more.
16. erst: formerly.
20. dule ye dree: grief you endure.
25. whatten: what kind of.
33. ha': hall.
37. doun fa': down fall.
41. Here begins the 'last will and testament,' a familiar part in older ballads (cf. *Lord Randal* (page 1)).

55. sall: shall.
56. Sic: such.

1. Point out the qualities of the old ballad present in the poem. 2. What suggestion do you get from the two false answers Edward gives to the first question of his mother? 3. Where is the climax of the poem and how is it reached?

Page 132. THE TWA SISTERS O' BINNORIE. Twenty-four versions or fragments of this ballad have been recorded in the British Isles and the story is also found in Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish literature. The form here printed is, like *The Braes o' Yarrow,* a composite made by William Allingham from various versions.

7. lo'ed: loved; aboon: above.
9. sair: sore.
45. draw your dam: lower the water by drawing the planks from the weir.
55. gouden: golden; bra': braw, brave, splendid.
77. The Norse ballads represent the harp (or fiddle) as being taken to a wedding, which happens to be that of the elder sister and the drowned girl's betrothed.
85. neist: next.

1. What effect is produced by the sound of the refrain? 2. Where are transitional parts of the story obviously lacking? 3. Are these gaps as noticeable here as in *Edward* or *Lord Randal?* 4. If they are not, suggest a reason.

Page 135. JOHN OF TOURS.

1. Point out as many resemblances as you can between Rossetti's imitation of the ballad and the old ballad. 2. In this poem there is a clear statement at the climax, whereas in *Edward* and *Lord Randal* the climax is made forcible by suggestion. Point out the particular lines in the various poems where these features occur.

Page 137. ROBIN HOOD.

10. Since men, etc. Since the time when (as in Robin's time) men knew nothing about renting or leasing of land, (i.e. because they took it for nothing).
21. seven stars: the Pleiades.
30. Trent: river flowing through the Robin Hood country.
31. merry tale: which was being told round the camp-fire by the 'clan.'
33. merry morris din: the din of the merry morris dance.
34. Gamelyn: the hero of a fourteenth-century outlaw tale.
36. 'grenè shawe': greenwood.
44. dockyard strokes: strokes of the axe felling the oaks for the building of ships.
55. tight: trim, firmly built.
62. burden: chorus of a song, the song itself (obs.).

1. In what mood is the poet as he writes of Robin Hood? 2. Pick out a couplet which expresses the apparent difference between the 'good old times' and the hard reality of the present. 3. Do you suppose there really was this difference?

Page 139. Sherwood.

21. laverock: lark.
23. grass-rings: in folk-lore the scene of fairy revels.
25. Oberon: king of fairyland.

1. What words in the first stanza especially suggest a sort of dream situation? 2. Are there any features which suggest the ballad form? 3. What indications do you find within the poem that the time is advancing? 4. Read this poem aloud after you have repeated a stanza of *Sing a Song of Sixpence* and note any similarities of the rhythm. Note also how such words as 'England' (l. 9), 'Sherwood' (l. 16), 'greenwood' (l. 17), etc., have to be pronounced with a lingering stress on the last syllable (almost Eng-lánd). Pick out other instances of this metrical effect.

Page 141. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

12. Eftsoons: at once.
20. Mariner. Notice the odd accentuation, and compare gossameres (l. 184) and countree (l. 518).
32. bassoon: wind instrument of wood, deeper in tone than the oboe.
36. minstrelsy: band of minstrels.
62. swound: swoon.
64. Thorough: through. Compare *thoroughfare*.
76. vespers: evenings. Usually it means evening service.
152. I wist: corruption of the adverb *iwis* (surely).
245. or ever: before ever. *Or* is not the ordinary conjunction, but an old form of *ere*.
297. silly: simple, homely (almost the original meaning of the word).
314. fire-flags: some electrical disturbance, perhaps the aurora; sheen: bright, fair.
337. 'gan work: did work.
384. The perpendicular rays of the sun seems to hold the ship immovable.
512. shrieve: give pardon for sin confessed (usually *shrive*).
535. ivy-tod: ivy bush.

1. Can you suggest a reason why it is a wedding guest that is detained by the mariner? 2. Why is the original situation recalled near the beginning (e.g. at l. 30) and forgotten for the most part during the rest of the poem? Why was the guest little interested in the wedding at the end? 3. What is there about the opening of this poem which suggests the ballad? Are there any other features which link it with that form? In what ways does it differ? 4. What special importance is there in the

information given at l. 25? 5. Do you notice any poetic effect in the succession of rhymes at ll. 46-8? Where else does the poet use this device? Mark the internal rhymes. 6. What is the name of the poetic effect at ll. 59-62? Can you find any other instances in the poem? 7. What evidences are there that the albatross was friendly? 8. What is the nature of the mariner's penance? 9. Indicate the progress of the story by stating the subject of each of the seven parts.

Page 161. HEATHER ALE.

11. Picts: Early inhabitants of Northern Ireland and Scotland; perhaps so called from their custom of painting their bodies.

36. vermin: the word indicates the frequent attitude of the victor towards the conquered even in modern times.

What alleged qualities of the Scotch are illustrated in the story?

Page 164. BORDER MARCH. This poem, while not narrative, is included here as being in character with Scott's imitations of the ballad proper. It gives the spirit of the Border fighters of the sixteenth century. The places referred to are all in the southern counties of Scotland, where Ettrick and Teviotdale are drained by the Tweed, and Eskdale and Liddesdale by the Esk.

4. Blue Bonnets: referring to the characteristic Scottish head covering, now called 'tam-o'-shanter.'

10. the Queen: Mary Queen of Scots.

11. hirsels: small holdings of sheep or cattle.

14. buckler: round shield.

1. Sketch a story that would fit the song. 2. In what respects does the poem resemble the ballad and in what respects is it different?

Page 165. ROUNDABOUTS AND SWINGS.

2. Fair-day come to-morrow: the day before Fair-day.

4. Pharaoh: man who provides amusements at fairs.

5. cove: fellow (slang).

6. tarrier: terrier.

7. lurcher: cross-bred dog much used by poachers.

8. roundabouts: merry-go-rounds.

13. the very spit: the exact copy.

21. night-jar: bird with monotonous song.

22. sooth: truth, wise saying.

1. Mark and count the stresses in the lines. What other poem or poems have this metre? Is it in any particular way suited to the subject? 2. What lesson of homely philosophy is emphasized in the poem? 3. Apart from the statement of it, how else is the idea emphasized?

Page 166. THE PILOT OF THE PLAINS first appeared in *White Wampum.*

What suggestion is given in the last stanza as to the occasion of the poem, i.e. what prompted the poet to write it?

Page 169. BLACK BILL'S HONEY-MOON is the third of the *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern,* a group of narrative poems told by various frequenters of the inn. The Mermaid Tavern was an inn of Elizabethan London, famous as the resort of the wits of the age, Ben Jonson, Kit Marlowe, Shakespeare, and many others. In the group of poems Noyes imagines these celebrities meeting from time to time, telling yarns, and making comments as the various stories progress. 'Black Bill's Honey-moon' is told by the famous sea-dog and father of Arctic exploration, John Davis, with Drayton, Ben Jonson, Marlowe, Bacon, and Shakespeare as audience. Bacon makes profound remarks about bees and honey much to the amusement of Jonson and Shakespeare, who contrive to cut him short.

7. pieces of eight: Spanish dollars, of various values.
8. bombards: an early kind of cannon, for throwing stones as well as cannon balls. So culverins, robinets (l. 9).
11. they that go down to the sea in ships: a quotation from Psalm cvii. 23.
19. Kit Marlowe: Christopher Marlowe, the poet; was said by many to be an atheist.
24. Cathay: old name for China.
25. Muscovy: Russia.
27. Bear: the constellation of the Great Bear or the 'Dipper': it may of course be the Little Bear which 'swings,' like the other, round the pole star.
49. cherubin's aureole: circle of golden light surrounding the head of a cherubin, as represented in pictures.
52. Hyrcania: a district in ancient Persia, south-east of the Caspian Sea. Its bears are frequently mentioned in classical story.
57. swette: old spelling for 'sweat.'
58. Pliny: 'the Elder,' to distinguish him from his nephew, called 'the Younger.' He was famous as the author of a book, *Natural History.*
75. Didymus: the apostle Thomas. (See John xxi. 2.) Cf. the phrase 'doubting Thomas.'
116. Pluto: Roman god of the underworld.
117. Enna: a flowery meadow in Sicily. Here it was fabled that Pluto carried off Proserpine.
118. Consider . . . the lilies. See Luke xii. 27.
127. perspires how, etc.: The reasoning through the passage is vague. As like as not Bill is himself the seaman who 'cares for his grog,' and in his ramshackle logic feels that the world isn't playing fair in making such a monster as the Hyrcanian bear. The thought in connection with the idea of honey makes him perspire.
135. Ursus: Latin for bear.

146. missal: prayer book illuminated with coloured capital letters.
152. metaphysical: philosophical.
154. riddle me redes: propound riddles for me to guess. (The Old English word *ræd* means 'counsel'; cf. 'Richard the Redeless,' 'Æthelred the Unready').
174. Hylas . . . Heracles. Hylas, a beautiful youth, dear to Heracles (or Hercules), while on the Argonautic expedition went ashore to draw water and was carried off by the water-nymphs. Heracles long sought for him in vain.
186. Drayton: Michael Drayton, one of the present audience. In his poem *Nymphidia* he recounts the deeds of a doughty elf, Pigwiggen, who among other adventures woos Queen Mab and fights a combat with her jealous spouse Oberon.
220. saraband: a slow Spanish dance.
222. morrice-ring: ring of morris dancers; the morris dance is a grotesque dance of persons usually in fancy costume representing Robin Hood and his men.
240. Dryad: a nymph of the trees in classical mythology.
256. Imperial City of the Bee. There is here probably an illusion to the simile of the 'Commonwealth of Bees' in *King Henry V,* Act, 1, scene ii, ll. 187 ff.
257. Chrysomelan: golden black (Greek *chrysos* =gold; *melan* = *black*). The word may mean 'golden honey,' from Lat. *mĕl*=honey, the -an being simply an English ending. It looks like a coinage for the occasion.
269. Golden Fleece. The allusion is to the expedition of the Argonauts (the sailors of the Argo) who went to fetch the golden fleece, guarded by a dragon at Colchis.
299. Oberon: See note to l. 186.
311. Satyr: (pron. Sā́t-er or Săt-er) a mythological creature, part man, part horse or goat: inhabitant of the woods.
312. Ptolemy: a celebrated mathematician, astronomer, and geographer of the second century of the Christian era.
335. Dian: Diana, the moon.
377. Polyphemus: see *Forty Singing Seamen* in Part I.

1. What evidence is there in the poem that an old salt is telling the yarn? 2. Find a few striking similes or metaphors. From what source are the images usually drawn? 3. To what extent does Bill, in the last stanza, come round to the chaplain's point of view? 4. Do you find any special feature of the chorus noteworthy and satisfying? 5. Does the chorus in any case or cases help along the story? 6. Examine the form of each canto and point out differences in number of feet in the lines, and in rhyme schemes. 7. Which of the cantos do you find the most satisfying as to form? Try to state a reason for your satisfaction. 8. Compare this poem with *Forty Singing Seamen* as to mood form, imagery, etc. 9. What other collection of narrative

poem do you know that resembles the *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* in being bound together in a framework?

Page 185. THE WELL OF SAINT KEYNE.

27. an if: if. Old writers use *and* or *an* for *if*.
35. The Angel summon'd her. St. Keyne is said to have been warned by angels of her approaching death.

Page 187. THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM. This powerful argument against the glorification of war is based on the battle of 13th of August 1704, at Blenheim on the Danube, where a large army of French and Bavarians was defeated with great slaughter by the British and their Austrian Allies, led by the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene. Kaspar of the ballad is supposed to be an Austrian.

1. This poem is in part a *satire,* i.e. it holds something up to ridicule. What is satirized? 2. What is the effect of putting the words in the mouth of a simple farmer and two children?

Page 189. THE STONE.

2. 'throwback': a popular term for what is known in the language of Evolution as 'reversion to type.'
6. Walt Whitman: See Biographical Notes.
8. polyphloesboean: loud-roaring; a humorous transliteration of πολυφλοισβο, the constant epithet in Homer for the sea.
14. chortled: chuckled loudly. (A word invented by Lewis Carroll in *Alice in Wonderland.*)
15. dithyrambic: wild. The dithyramb was a wild Greek choric hymn, especially used in honour of Bacchus.
18. concession line. In Ontario the townships are divided into 'concessions' separated by roads called 'concession lines' The roads intersecting these 'lines' are the 'side-roads.'
41. council: the township council.
49. pungs. A pung is a low box-sleigh; crotches. A crotch was a kind of stone-boat made of a sapling, the butt of which was fastened to the yoke and the crotched end allowed to trail on the ground. On this crotch a board platform was nailed if desirable.
77. dockers: iron supports holding up the log in the fireplace.
117. daedal: inventive, complex.
132. labyrinths. Theseus, the great legendary hero of Athens, went voluntarily as one of the seven youths whom the Athenians were obliged to send every year, with seven maidens. to Crete, to be devoured by the Minotaur. This monster, half-man and half-bull, was kept in the labyrinth. Theseus having slain the beast, found his way out, by means of a thread given him by Ariadne, daughter of the king of Crete.

134. Hercules. The cleansing of the Augean stables is one of the twelve 'labours of Hercules.' Augeas, king of Elis, had a herd of 3,000 oxen, whose stalls had not been cleansed for thirty years. The task of cleansing them in one day was successfully performed by Hercules.

1. What words does the poet use to represent the style of Whitman's 'man-poetry'? 2. Point out how the poet produces humorous effects in the poem. 3. What is the effect of the sentence 'the stone stayed' often repeated? 4. What image do you get from 'there is a man *loose* in Canada' (ll. 1 and 131)?

Page 194. The Machine.

8. pantomime: dumb show; (play) acting without words.

1. Since the poem is mainly about a man, why is the title 'The Machine'? 2. What poetic effect has the succession of rhymes ll. 28-31? 3. Pick out a few examples of inanimate things which are made living creatures. 4. What bond of sympathy was there between the boy and the girl?

Page 199. Last May a Braw Wooer.

1. braw: handsome and finely dressed.
2. sair: sorely; deave: deafen.
6. een: eyes.
11. mailen: farm; laird: owner.
13. loot: let.
14. waur: worse.
18. lang loan: long lane.
19. jad: jade.
21. niest: next.
22. tryst: fair; literally a meeting-place.
24. warlock: wizard.
31. spier'd: inquired; couthy: kindly.
32. gin: if.
33. schachl't: misshapen.
39. maun: must.

1. Point out a few of the girl's characteristics revealed in the poem.

Page 200. Simon Legree—a Negro Sermon.

Simon Legree was a slave dealer in Mrs. Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* 'a hideous impersonation of the brutalizing influence of slavery.'

24. Uncle Tom: a negro slave, pious and faithful, the hero of the novel just mentioned.
26. Eva: the angelic child of the novel, a pet of Uncle Tom, in whose presence she died.
27. sanctoriums: holy places.
60. shooting craps: throwing or rolling the dice.

1. What is the significance of the words 'a negro sermon'?

2. Is the poem a 'moral' poem? 3. What mood is the poet in? 4. Why are there so many common or 'vulgar' words, phrases, and pictures?

Page 202. THE RED FISHERMAN.

15. rosary: a string of beads on which are counted (told) the prayers which go to make up a devotion.
22. crozier: the crook-headed staff which is one of the insignia of a bishop.
38. advocate: generally a lawyer who pleads a case.
48. rood: quarter of an acre.
95. Congreve, Sir William (1772-1828) was the inventor of several military devices, of which the rocket was the most famous.
103. Ham and Shem: sons of Noah.
106. gentle: maggot.
128. Pater Noster: 'Our Father.' the first words (Latin) of the Lord's Prayer.
130. Bosworth plain: in Leicestershire, where Richard III, formerly the Duke of Gloucester, was defeated and slain, 1485.
159. St. Edmund's Bury: or Bury St. Edmunds, a town in Suffolk in which is situated a famous abbey founded by Canute.
183. Rivers: Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, whose sister, Elizabeth, married Edward IV, was beheaded by Richard III in 1483. Lord Hastings was also beheaded in the same year. These nobles are typical examples of the men who 'bent the knee' to the king.
199. Mistress Shore: the wife of a respectable young citizen of London, became the mistress of King Edward IV, the gallant of l. 196, and presumably the singer of the passage beginning at l. 178. After the death of Edward IV she was compelled by Richard III to do penance, and died in poverty.
207. tomes: volumes; loaded dice: weighted with lead so as to fall with a certain face up.
211. mitre: bishop's tall cap deeply indented at the top.
221. swaling wherry: a light row-boat swaying from side to side or up and down.
242. Emancipation. In the struggle for Catholic Emancipation (1801-29) the Lords especially had bitterly opposed political equality to the Catholics.

1. What suggestions are there in the first division of an ugly or sinister mystery? 2. How is this suggestion heightened in the second, especially ll. 35-62? 3. In this latter passage point out the words and images which sustain the suggestion of evil. 4. Enumerate the various kinds of bait with which the Red Fisherman landed his victims. 5. Who was supposed to be tempted by the bishop's mitre (l. 211)? 6. Explain why you think the abbot 'from that hour' stammered and stuttered while

performing his duties? 7. What term would you apply to a sentiment like that in ll. 35-8?

Page 210. AT THE CEDARS was printed in *The Magic House and Other Poems* (1895).

1. What poetic effect does the poet strive for in the rhymed words of the first stanza? 2. What indications can you find in the poem that the speaker is reporting the news of the calamity to the father of the girl?

Page 212. A MOTHER IN EGYPT.

About midnight . . . . Exodus xi. 4-5.

30. Amun ('the hidden or veiled one'): an Egyptian deity sometimes represented as a ram with large curving horns, sometimes as a being with a ram's head and a human body. Hathor: an Egyptian goddess.

1. Of what nationality and of what class is the mother? 2. In what way does she think that her own gods are better than the 'Other' God? 3. In what way does the idea of the poem transcend the conception of mere nationality?

Page 214. THE YARN OF THE 'NANCY BELL.'

2. Deal to Ramsgate: on the east coast of Kent.

71. shallot: a vegetable like garlic used in seasoning and in making pickles.

1. What elements in the poem suggest the ideas we associate with the word *yarn?* 2. Why doesn't the poem seem horrible? 3. What part of it suggests the ballad form?

Page 217. RIDING TOGETHER (1858)

4. our Lady's Feast: Lady Day, the Festival of the Annunciation, 25th March.

18. rood: cross.

1. What suggestions of the ballad are there in this poem? 2. What historical period is suggested?

Page 219. VITAI LAMPADA. The title of this poem means 'the torch of life.' The metaphor is from the Grecian torch-race, which was what we should call a relay race in which each runner, keeping the torch burning, hands it on to the next one in the relay. The phrase is archaic Latin, quoted from Lucretius.

1. Close: school playground. The word is pronounced like the adjective, not like the verb.

3. pitch: the piece of sward on which the cricket stumps are set up.

11. Gatling: the forerunner of the modern machine-gun, so called from the inventor, R. J. Gatling (1818-1903). By means of a revolving handle a constant rifle fire was kept up from eight or ten rifle barrels which revolved on an axis. It was patented in 1861.

1. Where in the poem is the title explained? 2. Explain as well as you can the relation of the second to the first stanza, and of the last to the first two. 3. What is ordinarily meant by 'playing the game'?

Page 220. HE FELL AMONG THIEVES. The events of the poem, as shown by the names of stanza four, occur in the hills in the extreme north of India. The hero has apparently made an expedition into the region, relying on the friendship of the native tribesmen. The title, of course, is suggested by Luke x. 30.

24. brasses: memorial tablets of brass.
25. Close: enclosed playground. (See notes to preceding poem, l. 1.)
32. Dons: professors and tutors.

1. How much of the situation can you gather from the first stanza? 2. To what class of English society did the hero belong? 3. What 'liner' is he probably thinking of? 4. Can you connect the poem with the preceding one in any way?

Page 222. THE VAGABOND.

Air: probably *Mut* ('Courage') in the 'Winter Journey' cycle.

2. lave: rest (Scots).
9. blow: death. Stevenson lived in constant expectation of death from tuberculosis.

1. What is the mood or spirit of the poem? 2. How is this mood created and sustained?

Page 223. THE JOYS OF THE ROAD.

17. Another: another hope.
26. Dickon: Dick, the comrade of l. 32.
27. Thirsty Sword. A not uncommon feature of old heroic stories is a sword which, once drawn, cannot be sheathed till it has drunk blood.
54. An impulse as wayward as the wind, as flickering as a dream.

1. What seems to be the 'chiefest' of the joys? 2. What is meant by the last line? 3. In what ways is this poem similar to *The Vagabond?* In what ways different?

Page 225. THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S.

Phyllida, etc.: I love Phyllis before all others.

1. St. James's: the English Court.
6. shoon: old plural of shoe.
11. 'Ombre': a card game.
47. Shrove-tide: the three days before Ash Wednesday.

1. What contrast is implied in the sub-title? 2. Is the emphasis on Phyllida or on the ladies? 3. Explain the title.

Page 227. TRULY GREAT.

11. nor voice to call: and that no other voice can call.

1. What contrast is implied in the word 'truly'? 2. What is the difference between the poet's idea of greatness and the ordinary one?

Page 228. GOBLIN MARKET. It seems much better to read this poem as a fairy-tale than as an allegory. In the folk-mind witches and elves are almost universally thought to have an evil influence over mortals; and Christina Rossetti herself denied that the poem had any allegorical meaning.

12. dewberries: in England a kind of blackberry, which has a bluish, dew-like bloom; in America the low blackberry, which has a large sweet fruit.
22. bullaces: wild plums; in America the muscadine grape.
24. Damsons: small dark purple plums. bilberries: fruit of a hardy shrub found on heaths and mountains in Europe; whortleberries. In America the name is sometimes given to the June-berry.
27. barberries: oblong red berries.
29. Citrons: fruit like lemon, but larger.
75. wombat: an Australian animal somewhat like a small bear.
76. ratel: an animal of the badger family.
83. beck: mountain stream, brook.
120. furze: yellow-flowered evergreen shrub that grows in waste lands.
161. blow: blossom.
179. Pellucid: transparent.
258. succous: succulent, juicy.
300. cankerous care: anxiety which caused her to waste away as the canker-worm destroys the bud.
451. copse: (=coppice) a small wood of underwood and small trees; dingle: deep, shady dell.
559. antidote: medicine given to counteract poison.

1. If it were not for the girls' words, what opinion would one form of the goblins and their wares up to l. 80? 2. What words in the passage 87-114 suggest that they aren't quite good in their intentions? 3. Where is it suggested that Laura has been affected by her commerce with the goblins? 4. What name is given to the vision at ll. 289-92? 5. What would we fail to know if the story of Jeanie had not been put in? What further effect has it on the course of the story of Lizzie and Laura? 6. What is the effect of the description of the goblins (ll. 329-61)? 7. Why are so many similes used (ll. 408-21)? Pick out another similar passage. Do these passages suggest that the poet had any other object than simply telling the story? Why are *long* similes usually put into poems? 8. What two things seemed to be necessary before the goblins obtained power over the human being? 9. What was necessary to undo the charm? 10. If the poet has intended the story to teach a lesson, what is the lesson?

Page 244. CORONACH. 'A wild expression of lamentation poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend' (Scott). The word is Celtic.

15. flushing: sending out of new shoots.
17. correi: 'the hollow side of the hill where game usually lies' (Lockhart's notes). This word is also Celtic and rhymes pretty well with 'foray.'

1. What is the point of the contrasts in the second stanza?
2. What is the point of the similes in the last four lines?

Page 244. KING HENRY VII AND THE SHIPWRIGHTS. King Henry VII is practically the founder of the English navy, which has had since his day the continuous life not enjoyed before.

2. comen: here, and in sawen, maken, the poet uses the old *-en* endings of the verb. Hamull on the Hoke: perhaps the local name for Hamble, a village about six miles from Southampton; Suthampton: Hampshire.
3. the 'Mary.' This and the names in the last stanza belong to actual ships of Henry's fleet.
8. clerk: rhyming with mark (the regular pronunciation in England).
10. haled: pulled.
11. habiliments: equipment; King his: King's (older spelling *Kinges*).
13. of a trusty tree: of sound wood (old ballad phrase).
15. shrakes: joists.
17. crope: crept.
18. felawes: fellows.
29. Gramercy: thanks; council: policy, advice (now *counsel*); liketh: pleases.
31. pricking: spurring.
33. naughty: villainous.
35. Sith: since.

1. With what other poems in the book would you associate this poem? Why? 2. Henry VII is represented in history as a very astute king who increased the power of the monarchy. What characteristic in him does the poem present which might explain his success?

Page 247. THE PRISONER OF CHILLON is founded on the actual experience of a Swiss patriot, François de Bonnivard, who in 1530 was confined *alone* in the castle of Chillon on Lake Geneva by the tyrannical Duke of Savoy. He was freed at the end of six years by a victory of the Swiss. In the poem Byron shows unusual simplicity of style, and contrives for once to lose himself in the personality of the prisoner.

21. One in fire, and two in field. The hero's brothers have died for Protestantism, one at the stake and two in battle.

35. marsh's meteor lamp: will-o'-the-wisp.
95. had stood: (subjunctive) would have stood. So in l. 141.
107. Lake Leman: the old name of Lake Geneva, Caesar's *Lacus Lemannus.*
110. fathom-line: line for measuring depth of water, usually marked in fathoms (units of six feet).
255, 257. mine: my ear; they: my eyes.
339. the . . . distant town: Montreux, two miles away.
381. There are many accounts of prisoners making pets of spiders and mice.

1. Write a brief character of each of the brothers. 2. What did the bird (ll. 251 ff.) symbolize to the prisoner? 3. From what you know of the author's life, what was there in this story which made such an appeal to him?

Page 259. HOW HE TURNED OUT.

6. Hannibal (247-183 B.C.): the great Carthaginian general and the greatest foe of Rome, whose armies he defeated many times before being himself conquered at Zama, (202).
7. differential calculus: a branch of higher mathematics.
8. animalculus: a very small animal, invisible to the naked eye.
9. orthometry: the art of making verses correctly.
14. Apelles: a celebrated Greek painter of the fourth century B.C.; Phidias: the greatest sculptor of ancient Greece, fifth century B.C. Here pronounced Phí-di-as to rhyme with 'hideous.'
15. polyglot: able to speak many languages; Johnsonian: could write and talk in the style of Dr. Samuel Johnson, a famous English man of letters of the eighteenth century.
16. Websterian: Daniel Webster (1782-1852) was probably the greatest orator the United States has produced. Ciceronian: as pure as that of Cicero, celebrated statesman, orator, and writer of Rome (106-43 B.C.).
22. sequel: what follows; here, the conclusion.

1. In what way is the 'sequel' of this story 'unusual'? 2. Is there any peculiarity in the rhymes of this piece which adds to the humour? 3. Compare this poem with *Robinson Crusoe's Story* as regards rhyme effects.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Browning, Robert (1812-89), born in a London suburb, was fortunate in having a father who sympathized with his son's early inclination for poetry. By 1846, the date of his marriage to the poetess Elizabeth Barrett, he had published two long poems, two dramatic poems, seven dramas, and two volumes of 'dramatic' lyrics and romances. After 1846 he wrote no more dramas, but all his subsequent work has the dramatic element which is so plainly marked in his earlier writings. His favourite method is to conceive a person speaking to an imaginary listener in a situation which might constitute a scene in an actual drama. Browning and his wife lived in Florence for fifteen years, and much of his best poetry is inspired by Italian life and art. *The Italian in England* bears witness to the poet's sympathy with the Italians in their struggle for freedom.

Burns, Robert (1759-96), Scotland's most loved poet, was the son of a poor farmer of Ayrshire. With a few exceptions, like the narrative *Tam o' Shanter,* his poems are lyrical, many being songs written to popular Scottish airs. His work is distinguished by understanding of the human heart, hatred of sham, and love of democracy.

Byron—George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)—is personally the most interesting of the Romantic poets from his high rank, his easy success in letters, his dissipated life, his voluntary exile, and his early death in the Greek War of Independence. Into almost all his writings the poet himself intrudes, gloomy, injured, and scornful. His fame rests mainly upon his satires, of which *Don Juan* and *The Vision of Judgment* are the masterpieces. Other works are the plays, the Oriental romances, and the poetical guide-book, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.* Among his few short narratives are the spirited *Mazeppa* and the restrained and moving *Prisoner of Chillon.*

Carman, Bliss (1861-1929), 'Canada's Poet Laureate,' is before all else a poet of nature. His *Low Tide on Grand Pré* (1893) was the first of a long series of volumes of poetry and prose. Two of his later volumes of verse are *Ballads and Lyrics* (1923) and *Far Horizons* (1925).

Carryl, Charles Edward (1842-1920), a native of New York city, found time during a busy life as director in various railroads to write two books which were immensely popular, one of them, *Davy and the Goblin* (1884), having gone through twenty printings. Many of the ballads and nonsense verses for which Carryl is noted are contained in these two volumes.

Chalmers, Patrick R. (1872-), is a London banker who sometimes contributes verse of a cheerful tone to *Punch*. The selection in this volume is from his *Green Days and Blue Days.*

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor (1772-1834), was associated with Wordsworth in the *Lyrical Ballads,* the herald of the Romantic Revival. His best poems were written under the influence of opium. He delivered lectures on Shakespeare and is the author of the well-known *Biographia Literaria.*

Daly, Thomas Augustine (1871-), left college at the end of his second year to enter journalism. While on the staff of various Philadelphia papers he became noted for his columns, in which he published much of his popular verse. His gift for dialect poetry is illustrated in his best-known volumes *Canzoni* (1906) and *Carmina* (1909), but he has written verse in ordinary English as well (e.g. *Songs of Wedlock,* 1916).

Davies, William Henry (1870-1940), a native of Wales, led for over thirty years a roving life in America and in England, as is related in his prose work *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp.* He has published various volumes of poems, mainly devoted to nature, the more recent of which are the autobiographical *A Poet's Pilgrimage, Later Days* (1925), *The Poems of W. H. Davies* (1934), and *Love Poems* (1935).

de la Mare, Walter (1873-), is both novelist and poet. His verse is musical and imaginative, which partly accounts for his eminence in the difficult field of children's poetry. The most popular of his books are *The Listeners* (1912), *Peacock Pie* (1913), and *Come Hither* (1923). More recent titles are *The Connoisseur and Other Stories* (1926) and *A Forward Child* (1935).

Dobson, Henry Austin (1840-1921), a charming essayist, is chiefly known in poetry as a writer of lighter verse, especially intricate lyrical forms of French origin such as the villanelle and ballade.

Fletcher, John Gould (1886-), is an American poet, a graduate of Harvard, who after spending part of his life in Massachusetts, moved to England where he has lived since 1916. He has several times revisited America, travelling from coast to coast on lecture tours. He first attracted attention by a book of poems, *Irradiations, Sand and Spray* (1915), and since that time he has published several other volumes.

Frost, Robert Lee (1875-), is of Pilgrim Father stock. Owing mainly to straitened family circumstances his education has been most irregular; yet such has been the impression which his poetry has made upon his countrymen that he has had many academic degrees conferred upon him, including a Litt.D. from Yale. In 1924 he was awarded the Pulitzer prize for poetry for his volume *New Hampshire.* A more recent volume of poems is *A Lone Striker* (1933).

GIBSON, WILFRID WILSON (1878-   ), is an English poet and writer of verse plays. He is rather fond of tragic situations affecting simple folk in rude surroundings. A collected edition of his poems was published in 1926, and more recently *Islands* (1932) and *Fuel* (1934).

GILBERT, SIR WILLIAM SCHWENCK (1836-1911), was an English humorist whose fame rests upon his *Bab Ballads* and the comic operas he composed in partnership with Sir Arthur Sullivan—*H.M.S. Pinafore, The Mikado,* etc.

HERRICK, ROBERT (1591-1674), one of the chief of the English pastoral lyrists, published his *Hesperides* the work by which he is best known, in 1648.

HUNT, JAMES HENRY LEIGH (1784-1859), friend of Byron, Shelley, and Keats, is best known in letters as a journalist and writer of genial essays. His poetry shows much metrical skill and facility in the development of narrative.

JOHNSON, EMILY PAULINE (Tekahionwake, 1862-1913), was born on the estate of her father, Head Chief of the Six Nations, in the Indian Reserve near Brantford, Ontario. For a number of years she was well known as a poet and entertainer in the British Isles and the United States as well as in Canada. Her chief publications are *The White Wampum* (1894), *Canadian Born* (1903), *Flint and Feathers* (1912), all books of verse; and *Legends of Vancouver* (1911). Her later years were spent in Vancouver, and her ashes were buried near Siwash Rock, at the western extremity of Stanley Park.

KEATS, JOHN (1795-1821), has a place in the first rank of English lyrical poets notwithstanding the fact that he died at the early age of twenty-five. His longer works are *Endymion* and *Hyperion*.

KIPLING, RUDYARD (1865-1936), born in Bombay and writing first in India on Indian themes, lived latterly in the county of Sussex in England. He is one of the world's great short-story writers. In his poetry, whether appearing under its own covers as with *Barrack-Room Ballads* and *The Seven Seas,* or scattered among his prose narratives, he is 'a man speaking to men' and a master of versification. Few modern writers so completely understand the form and spirit of the old ballad. More recent publications are *Debits and Credits* (short stories and poems) (1926), *Collected Dog Stories* (1934), and an apparently unfinished autobiography *Something of Myself* (published posthumously in 1937).

LINDSAY, VACHEL (1879-1931), spent a large part of his time making walking tours through the United States, preaching the gospel of beauty, especially beauty in community building.

Two of these tours he has described in volumes of prose. He first won fame by a poem, *General Booth enters into Heaven* (1913), which established his reputation as a poet of merit. During the last dozen years of his life he travelled widely in his own country, in Canada, and in Europe, lecturing and reading his own verses. His poetry is very unconventional both in thought and form.

LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH (1807-82), a professor of modern languages at Harvard, is chief among the New England poets of the mid-nineteenth century. Of his longer narratives *Hiawatha* and *Evangeline* are the best known. Many of his ballads and other shorter narrative pieces are included in *Tales of a Wayside Inn,* in which he reproduces with great spirit and metrical skill stories from various lands.

MCARTHUR, PETER (1866-1924), born of Scottish parents at Ekfrid, Ontario, contributed to several Canadian, American, and English newspapers and magazines, and was for a time editor of the American *Truth.* After living for a number of years in the United States and England he returned in 1908 to the farm on which he was born, and remained there until his death. *In Pastures Green* (1915), a collection of some of his best articles on farm life, is perhaps his most popular book. It is from this volume that *The Stone* is taken.

MACDONALD, WILSON PUGSLEY (1880-), born and educated in Ontario, is a widely known Canadian lyric poet. He has published *Songs of the Prairie Land* (1918), *Caw, Caw Ballads* (1930), *A Song of the Undertow* (1935), and other volumes of verse besides several plays and playlets.

MACKAY, CHARLES (1814-89), was a Scotsman whose songs were immensely popular in his own day. The best known of these are perhaps *Cheer, Boys, Cheer!—The Departing Emigrants,* and *The Good Time Coming.* As *The Times* correspondent during the Civil War in the United States he discovered and revealed the Fenian conspiracy in America.

MASEFIELD, JOHN (1874-), spent a portion of his life as a wanderer, even shipping as a common sailor. In 1930 he succeeded Robert Bridges as Poet Laureate of England and has to his credit a long list of novels, plays, essays, and volumes of poetry. Characteristic long poems are *Dauber* and *Reynard the Fox.* He has written many lyrics and ballads, generally expressing healthy optimism and love of activity in the open.

MORRIS, WILLIAM (1834-96), was a man of varied interests who achieved renown in at least three lines of activity. When twenty-seven years old he began a career of designing and manufacturing domestic decorations and furniture; and working on the principle that what is useful may also be beautiful, he helped to revolutionize public taste as regards the interior of English houses. His idealism and his experiences with working men led him to socialism, and he was one of the originators of the Socialist League. As a man of letters Morris was pre-eminently a story-teller, who recounted with individuality and charm Arthurian romance, Old French, Norse, and Greek legend. In all his varied activities he was dominated by the ideal of beauty, and that, too, in an age whose dominant spirit was commercialism.

Newbolt, Sir Henry (1862-1937), is an English novelist and poet. His chief interest is evident in the titles *Admirals All, Songs of the Sea, Songs of the Fleet,* among his poetical collections. His narrative poems, while not as numerous as his lyrics, show almost equal skill. As official naval historian he wrote *A Naval History of the War* (1920), but since *My World as in my Time* (an autobiography, 1932), he has not published anything of importance.

Noyes, Alfred (1880-), is one of the modern English poets who have been powerfully influenced by the romance of the sea. In 1913 he delivered the Lowell Lectures on 'The Sea in Poetry.' He was Professor of Modern English Literature at Princeton University from 1914 to 1923. His first book, *The Loom of Years,* appeared in 1902, and since then he has published many volumes, amongst them *Forty Singing Seamen* (1907), *Drake* (1908), *Tales of the Mermaid Tavern* (1913), and *A Salute to the Fleet* (1915). Volumes I and II of his *Collected Poems* appeared in 1910, Volume III in 1920, and Volume IV in 1927. His most recent book is *The Unknown God* (1934).

Pickthall, Marjorie L. C. (1883-1922), the daughter of English parents who came to Canada in 1890, first attracted notice by her contributions to the Toronto *Mail and Empire* while she was still in her teens. In 1913 a volume of her collected verse was issued under the title *A Drift of Pinions,* and was received with a chorus of applause from reviewers on both sides of the Atlantic. She died at Vancouver in 1922.

Piper, Edwin Ford (1871-), is Professor of English at the University of Iowa. In his poetry he shows himself to be a reputable narrator and interpreter of the folk-lore of his district. His publications include *Barbed Wire and Wayfarers* (1923), and *Paintrock Road* (1927).

Poe, Edgar Allan (1809-40), was an American journalist of unconventional habits and of pronounced genius. He is generally regarded as the father of the modern short story. In poetry his favourite themes are love and death, which he presents in unreal surroundings and with great metrical skill.

Praed, Winthrop Mackworth (1802-39), distinguished himself at Eton by his brilliant work in a school journal. He entered Parliament at the age of twenty-eight, but although he continued as a member until his death, he never achieved fame. His reputation rests upon his verse, which exhibits cleverness and wit, frequently pathos, and sometimes grim humour such as pervades the present selection.

Pratt, Edwin John (1883-), Professor of English Literature, Victoria College, University of Toronto, is a Newfoundlander, who attended the University of Toronto, where he secured the degrees of B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. His first book of poems, *Newfoundland Verse,* appeared in 1923 and since that time he has published several further volumes such as *Titans* (1926), *Many Moods*—which includes 'Putting Winter to Bed' —(1932), *The Titanic* (1935), and *The Fable of the Goats* (1937). Most of Dr. Pratt's poetry is of the sea, or has the ocean for a background.

Robinson, Edwin Arlington (1869-1935), after publishing two or three volumes of verse secured a position through the President of the United States in the New York Custom House. When he published *The Man against the Sky* (1916), he was recognized as one of the chief poets of the Republic. Later he entered the field of romance, re-vivifying the Arthurian legend with *Merlin* (1917), *Launcelot* (1920), and *Tristram* (1929). Three times he won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry and in 1922 Yale University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature.

Robinson, Edwin Meade (1879-), has been engaged in journalism since the beginning of the century, and for years has conducted a column of prose and verse in the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*. In verse he is a skilful technician, as the rhymes of 'How he turned out' make evident. The title of one volume of his poems is *Piping and Panning* (1920).

Rossetti, Christina (1830-94), sister of the poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, began writing poetry as a child of twelve, and a volume of her verse was privately printed when she was seventeen. What is generally considered to be her best work, *Goblin Market and Other Poems,* was published in 1862. The touch of sadness that pervades most of her work is said to be due to an unhappy love affair in her youth.

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel (1828-82), son of an exiled Italian patriot, was both artist and poet. As a painter he was one of the founders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, whose aim was sincerity and faithful adherence to nature. His poetry is characterized by mysticism and romantic interest in the Middle Ages.

Scott, Duncan Campbell (1862-1947), entered the Canadian Civil Service in 1880, and in 1913 became Deputy Superintendent-General of the Department of Indian Affairs. Besides performing his duties with efficiency, Dr. Scott was able to find leisure to publish several volumes of prose and poetry. Publications which contain some of his best work are *Lundy's Lane and Other Poems* (1916) and *Beauty and Life* (1921). *The Witching of Elspie: a Book of Stories* was printed in 1923, and his *Complete Poems in* 1926. Forty-four of his later poems appeared in 1935 under the title *The Green Cloister.*

Scott, Frederick George (1861-), Archdeacon of Quebec, is the author of several volumes of poetry. As a chaplain in the Canadian Expeditionary Force he performed notable service, for which he was awarded the D.S.O. His experiences in the War have found expression in *The Great War as I saw it* (1922, 2nd edition, 1934). In 1927 he won one of the David Awards (literature section) with a book of poems, *In Sun and Shade,* and in 1933 he published a volume of *Selected Poems.*

Scott, Sir Walter (1771-1832), was educated for the Scottish bar, but soon turned from the law to letters, where he won distinction as poet, novelist, and critic. His songs and other short lyrics, often introduced into the novels, are surpassed by those of but one other Scottish poet. His narrative poems either follow the form of the old popular ballad, as in *Rosabelle,* or are carried to the length and complexity of the metrical romance, as in *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake.* He is distinguished by his straightforward style and his bold presentation of action and of romantic scenery.

Southey, Robert (1774-1843), is reckoned the least of the three 'Lake Poets.' He is distinguished as a writer of prose, especially of biography. As a poet he shows more scholarship and metrical skill than imagination and inspiration. He spent much time on the construction of great epic poems, of which *Roderick* is the least unsuccessful. His poetic fame rests chiefly on his ballads, in which he handles with great effectiveness themes that are for the most part grim, grotesque, or frankly humorous.

Stephens, James (1882-), is an Irish poet who entered the field of letters by way of a solicitor's office and who won fame as a prose writer with such volumes as *The Crock of Gold* (1912) and *Here are Ladies* (1913). In 1925 he visited the United States and won popularity as a reader of his own poetry. *The Rocky Road to Dublin,* which included 'The Adventures of Seumas Beg' (child's poetry), was published in 1915. A volume of Stephens's *Collected Poems* appeared in 1926, and *Strict Joy Poems* in 1931.

Stevenson, Robert Louis (1850-94), came of a line of famous Scots engineers. Ill-health unfitted Robert Louis to follow the family profession, and he was allowed to devote himself to literature. An invalid for a great part of his life, he visited many parts of Europe, America, and Oceania in search of health. He finally settled at Apia on one of the Samoan islands, and there he died and was buried in 1894. Notwithstanding the depressing circumstances in which most of his work was done, his writings breathe the spirit of youth. His best-known works are *A Child's Garden of Verses, Treasure Island, Kidnapped,* the shorter *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* and several volumes of essays.

Tennyson, Alfred Lord (1809-92), is the most popular of all the poets of the Victorian age. In many respects he was the typical man of letters of the middle and later nineteenth century. Intensely interested in all the thought movements of his time, he had the gift of being able to express himself, and to a large extent his age, in memorable poetry. He became Poet Laureate in 1850. The moral and religious colouring of his best-known works, *In Memoriam* (1850) and *Idylls of the King* (1859-72), made an especial appeal to the latter half of the nineteenth century. Readers of the twentieth century, however, seem to find more delight in the exquisite music of his shorter pieces.

Whitman, Walt (1819-92), was an American poet of many avocations who made long walking tours up the western rivers into Canada. Besides its democratic sentiments his poetry is characterized by its very unconventional form—sentences of varied length with a musical rhythm are broken up into uneven lines, usually unrhymed. His chief work is *Leaves of Grass* (1855), which was banned in Massachusetts for its alleged indecency; but he also wrote of his experiences on the battlefields of the Civil War.

Wordsworth, William (1770-1850), is the recognized leader of the Romantic movement in English poetry. His life was spent almost entirely in the Lake Country of north England, whence the term 'Lake Poets,' applied to him and his friends, Coleridge and Southey. His chief interest is in humbler humanity and in nature. He points constantly to the woods and hills as a medicine for the mind and heart and as a guide to our mutual understanding. His lyrical poems, by which he is, perhaps, best known, include the ode on *Intimations of Immortality, Tintern Abbey,* and a host of fine shorter pieces. In longer narrative his *Excursion* is unsuccessful, but *The Prelude,* the autobiographical account of a poet's development, is a very great achievement. He has written many short narratives, mainly in the ballad form, and is credited with the invention of the poetical narrative of middle length, of which *Michael* is a fine example.

Yeats, William Butler (1865-1939), was an Irish poet of genius, one of the leaders in the Celtic Revival, and was one of the early directors of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. Though he has written several plays and volumes of prose, his fame will ultimately rest upon his lyric poems, of which he has produced a long list, e.g. *The Wind among the Reeds* (1899), *The Wild Swans of Coole* (1919), *Later Poems* (1922), and *The Tower* (1928).

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